GMA sees Basilan, 2 cities in ARMM

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

FRIDAY, AUGUST 17, 2001 ★ 64 PAGES 6 SECTIONS VOL.16 NO. 250 ₱15

MARAMING DRUMSTICKS NA ITO!

Soon, cloned chicken by the billions

LONDON—It could turn into a sci-fi nightmare, but the envisioned supply could also mean the end of family bickering over who gets the leg or the breast.

Two US companies

SOON/ A7

No suspects yet, says Aussie embassy

BY DONA Z. PAZZIBUGAN

JUSTICE Secretary Hernando Perez spoke too soon, on a matter best left to a spokesperson of the Australian police.

Australian police authorities investigating the July 10 murders of the Gonzales family in Sydney have not yet declared any suspects in the crime, the Australian Embassy in Manila

NO/ A7

Ping, Vic face off today

Drilon: It's about time evidence is presented

BY ARMAND N. NOCUM

IT'S D-DAY today for either beleaguered Sen. Panfilo Lacson or his accuser Col. Victor Corpus, as the latter faces senators to substantiate charges that the former chief of the Philippine National Police engaged in money laundering, drug trafficking and kidnapping activities.

Corpus, if and when he appears at a Senate hearing this morning, goes with the apparent full support of the President, the Armed Forces chief of staff, and now the archbishop of Manila. Jaime Cardinal Sin met Corpus Tuesday and "thanked him for his courage," according to a Jesuit priest who was at the meeting, ***(See related stories on Page A16.)***

The inquiry is expected to bring Senator Lacson face to face with the head of the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (Isafp) for the first time since Corpus accused him earlier this month of laundering drug money in three countries.

In a radio interview, Lacson said those invited to testify at the hearing "will be asked to present evidence" to the three Senate committees holding the inquiry: the blue ribbon, public order and illegal drugs, and national defense and security.

The senator said he would settle for no less than "authenticated documents" from his accusers.

Corpus, for his part, welcomed "the opportunity to reveal what we know." He has so far failed to prove his charges that Lacson, his wife Alice and ex-President Joseph Estrada laundered a total of $728.5 billion abroad. He has promised to present his evidence before the

PING/ A16

Aetas start to drain Pinatubo crater lake

BY TONETTE OREJAS
PDI Central Luzon Desk

BOTOLAN, Zambales—They butchered a pig, spilled its blood and offered tobacco cigars as *atang* (peace offering) to Apo Namalyari, the deity guarding Mt. Pinatubo.

Then they fell silent, glanced up at the sky and prayed for safety.

Thus did 10 Aeta workers finally reach the peak of Mt. Pinatubo yesterday to begin a dangerous mission believed by volcanology officials as the first attempt in the world to drain water from a volcano to save the lives of more than 40,000 residents here.

The waters in the crater-lake of the 1,400-meter high volcano have risen to dangerous levels. The Aetas will build a water spillway or canal to divert the flow away from this farming town.

With all the risks involved in their life-saving task, each Aeta is paid P180 a day. They are provided picks, shovels and wheelbarrows, along with a week's worth of rice and canned food.

Last week, an aerial survey of the crater-lake showed only a gap of about 16 feet between the lake's surface and the crater's rim.

The gap could close fast with the onset of the rainy season. Hence, the necessity of building a canal on the lowest point of the crater facing Botolan called the Maraunot notch.

The canal is designed to prevent 210 million cubic meters of water trapped in the crater lake from swamping 12 towns in Botolan during heavy rainfall in the course of this year, according to two government engineers supervising the work.

Last month, the Britain-based Oxfam aid organization warned that in a worst-case scenario, 300 million cubic meters of lahar could

AETAS/ A16

THE FIRST-EVER attempt in the world, according to Filipino volcanologists, to drain a crater lake to avoid a deluge of lahar and floodwaters begins on Thursday when an advance team of 10 Aeta workers reaches the peak of Mt. Pinatubo to build a water spillway. For their dangerous, life-saving mission, the Aetas are only armed with shovels, picks, a wheelbarrow and a pig as a peace offering to their gods. AP/ BULLIT MARQUEZ

Wong's sudden departure sign of guilt–Corpus

BY CARLITO PABLO
AND NORMAN BORDADORA

KIM Wong's sudden departure Tuesday for Hong Kong indicates guilt, according to military intelligence chief Col. Victor Corpus.

Corpus said in an interview yesterday over radio dzBB that if Wong were the legitimate businessman he was supposed to be, he would have nothing to fear.

"If he has not committed any crime, he must present himself before the courts once he is formally charged," Corpus said in Filipino.

But Wong, whom Corpus had identified as Sen. Panfilo Lacson's financier in the illegal drug trade, said in a phone interview last night with GMA-7 that he fled the country because he feared for his life.

He said that he would return if subpoenaed by the Senate, and that he would consult his lawyer Francisco Chavez on the possible filing of a counter-charge against Corpus.

He said that prior to his departure, a certain Captain Rivera of the Corpus-led Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (Isafp) had come to his house and asked for his photograph.

Wong is said to be now in Xiamen, China.

He told GMA-7 that for his family's protection, he wrote his "old home address"—95 Economia St., Makati City—on his departure card.

Chavez, a former solicitor general, said earlier yesterday that not guilt but fear compelled his client to leave the country.

The lawyer said Wong had received "inside information" that Isafp agents were poised to abduct him to force him to confess that he and Lacson were involved in multimillion-dollar drug deals in the country and the Asia-Pacific.

Lacson, a close friend of Wong's, also told reporters as much after yesterday's weekly breakfast

WONG'S/ A16

RP, China reject ransom demands for kidnapped Sinos

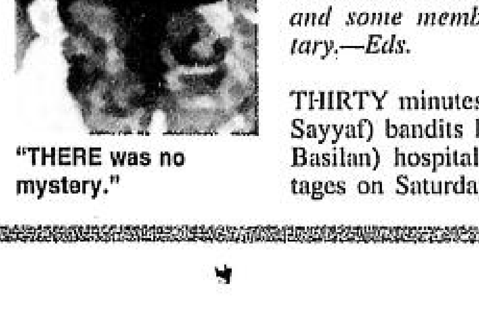
ZAMBOANGA—Both the Philippines and China have rejected ransom demands for four Chinese and a Filipino kidnapped by suspected renegade members of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, Special Presidential Assistant for Mindanao Jesus Dureza said yesterday.

"Chinese officials told the Philippine government that they will not pay any ransom for the release of the hostages, but said they are hoping to see their citizens freed as soon as possible," Dureza said.

The Macapagal administration has been "regularly briefing the Chinese Embassy on the progress of the situation . . . but we will not pay a single centavo to the kidnappers," he said.

The kidnappers, led by a certain Abu Hamsa,

RP/ A18



"THERE was no mystery."

'What time will you attack us?'

Book says some military men in cahoots with Abus

BY JOSE TORRES JR.

The following is an excerpt from "Into the Mountain: Hostaged by the Abu Sayyaf," the first book-length account of last year's kidnapping of 53 Filipino hostages by the Abu Sayyaf. It throws new light on the allegations by Basilan priest Fr. Cirilo "Loi" Nacorda of connivance between the Abu Sayyaf and some members of the military.—Eds.

THIRTY minutes before the (Abu Sayyaf) bandits left the (Lamitan, Basilan) hospital (with their hostages on Saturday, June 2, 2001), however, Abu Sayyaf spokesperson Abu Sabaya made a mysterious phone call. "I thought you said it was all clear. Why are you still shooting?" he was heard saying.

To former Abu Sayyaf victims, however, Abu Sabaya's phone call poses no mystery. Before the May 3, 2000 "rescue" of Father Rhoel (Gallardo, the missionary director of the Claretian School of Tumahubong, Basilan) and the other Mount Punoh Mahadji hostages (all abducted on March 20, 2000 from Claret and three other schools in Basilan), the Abu Sayyaf spokesperson also made a call on his cellular phone.

Marissa (Rante, one of the Claret schoolteachers abducted on March 20, 2000 and who fled to freedom during the May 3 military encounter) still remembers vividly when the military assault (on the Abu Sayyaf camp high up) on Mount Punoh Mahadji began on April 19, 2000. She was at the "high ground," where she was being kept (alone) by Abu Sabaya.

"What time will you attack us? What time exactly will the grenades hit us?" Marissa heard Abu Sabaya asking someone on his cellular phone.

The calls did not happen only

WHAT/ A18

GMA sees Basilan, 2 cities in ARMM

BY JULIET L. JAVELLANA
AND PDI MINDANAO BUREAU

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday said Basilan province, a stronghold of the Abu Sayyaf bandits, had voted to join the Autonomous Region for Muslim Mindanao.

Speaking at the National Prayer Breakfast, the President also said voters of Marawi City and possibly those of Cotabato City, had also decided to join the four-province Muslim autonomous area in a plebiscite held on Tuesday.

Certain sectors in Basilan province and Marawi City, however, accused Malacañang of tampering with the results of the plebiscite held in Mindanao and Palawan.

"Marawi City, the province of Basilan and possibly Cotabato City have voted to join the expanded Autonomous Region for Muslim Mindanao," Ms Macapagal said.

Her aides earlier said that Malacañang would claim success

GMA/ A7

MAY BOSES NA ANG MASA!

No 'hepa B' from shellfish

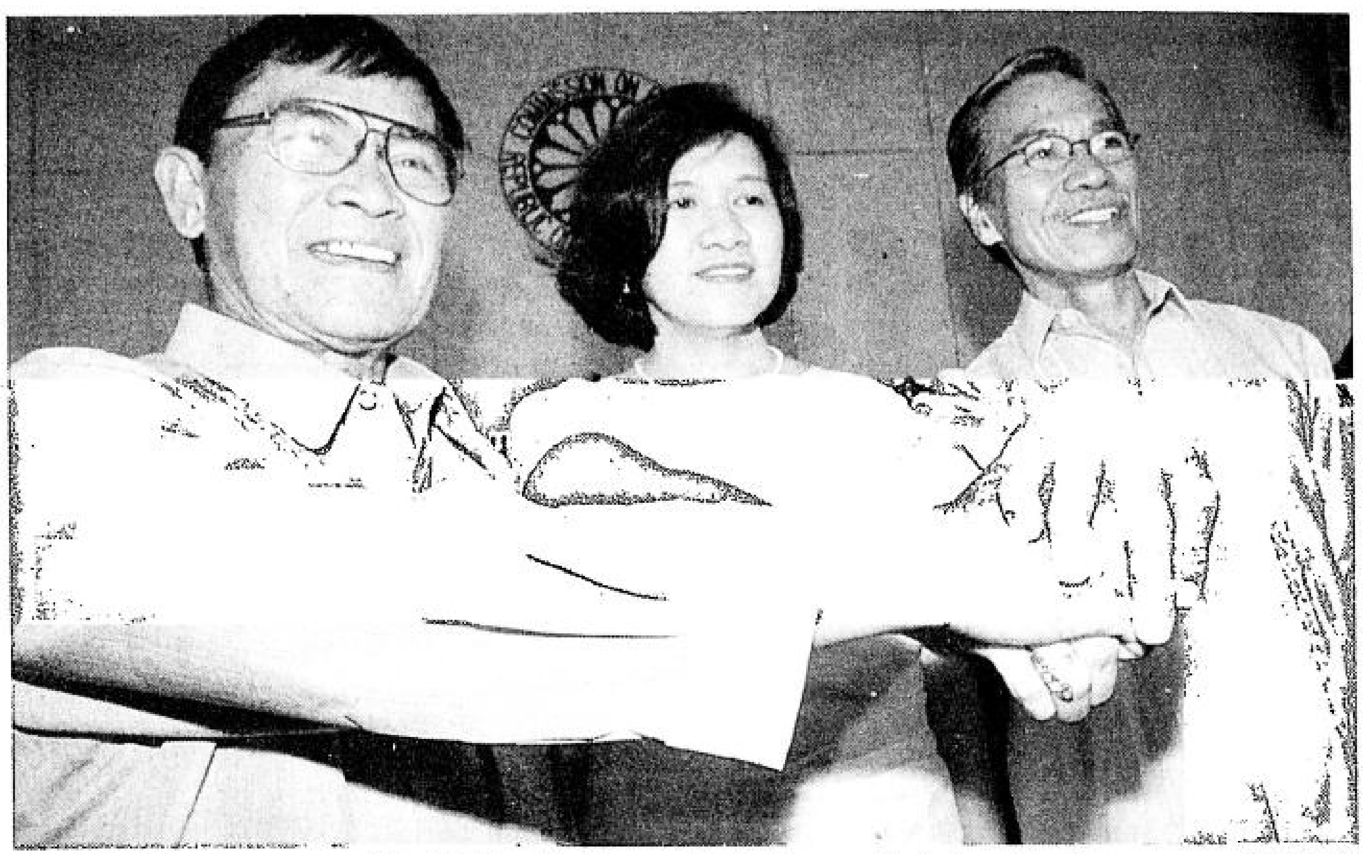
THE AGRICULTURE department yesterday debunked text messages linking hepatitis B virus with eating shellfish.

The department made the denial when no less than the director of the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources, Malcolm Sarmiento Jr., received a text message to this effect.

Agriculture Secretary Leonardo Montemayor said that his department immediately validated the message with the Department of Health, which said that hepa B is acquired through infected syringes, blood transfusion and even sexual contacts.

Sarmiento himself asked the DOH about the possibility of acquiring hepa B from shellfish or if there was a noticeable rise in hepa B cases because of shellfish consumption. *Cynthia Balana*

Bayan goes to Congress



ALL FOR ONE... Congressmen Crispin Beltran, Lisa Maza and Satur Ocampo after their proclamation. ERIK ARAZAS

Militant 'street parliamentarians' finally proclaimed party-list solons

BY PHILIP C. TUBEZA AND GERALD G. LACUARTA

"JUST call me Ka Bel."

Bayan Muna party-list representative-elect Crispin Beltran said yesterday he would like to be called by his nickname rather than be addressed as "Congressman Beltran."

Beltran and fellow Bayan Muna party mates Satur Ocampo and Lisa Maza were proclaimed yesterday afternoon by Comelec chair Alfredo Benipayo in simple ceremonies witnessed by around 30 supporters at the Comelec session hall. The resolution of their proclamation was signed by five of seven commissioners.

Benipayo said a copy of the resolution will be transmitted to the House to pave the way for the oath-taking of the Bayan Muna representatives, which was expected to take place today. The Bayan Muna staff was reportedly making arrangements for an oath-taking before Supreme Court Justice Hilario Davide Jr.

Beltran said one of the first things he will do is circulate a memo in Congress, stating that he should be addressed as "Ka Bel."

"'Congressman Beltran' sounds a little too stuffy for me, and except maybe during formal functions, I would much prefer to be addressed by the name the mass movement gave me," Beltran said.

"I have been 'Ka Bel' since I was 25 years old, and I will continue to be called so. As a title and a reference, being called 'Ka' is on par with being called congressman or honorable any day," he added.

True colors

Even beneath a neatly pressed *barong*, Beltran could not hide his true colors.

Asked if being member of the House would soften his militancy, Beltran paused and pulled out an oversized red bandana to wipe his face. That was his answer.

Beltran will bring his old red bandana to a whole new arena on Monday, when he and fellow militant leaders Ocampo and Maza are expected to attend their first session at the House.

Ocampo, 62, is a former spokesperson of the National Democratic Front; Beltran, 69, chairs the militant Kilusang Mayo Uno labor center, while Maza, 33, heads the women's group Gabriela.

They will each serve three-year terms in the House.

Ocampo and Beltran were clad in simple *barongs*, while Maza wore a plain white dress.

"I will still be there in the parliament of the streets," Ocampo said, after a ceremonial raising of their hands by the Comelec commissioners.

"We shall remain as mass leaders of our organizations; it just so happens we are also representatives of Bayan Muna," he said. "Our being in Congress is only supplementary."

Beltran, who had led many labor strikes in the past, vowed to continue his militancy in the halls of Congress, saying "we will do all we can to use Congress as another venue in the fight for the people's rights and welfare."

No illusions

"We don't have plans and illusions to transform the Philippine Congress, the bastion of conservatism, into a session hall of the poor and marginalized, but we intend to make our colleagues there sit up and listen to the voice of the people," Beltran said.

Beltran said he will file a bill seeking a P125 wage increase as soon as he assumes office.

Ocampo said he will file resolutions calling for the creation of an oversight committee to ensure a speedy trial for former President Joseph Estrada, and another one seeking a review of the government's commitments to the World Trade Organization, particularly in the areas of deregulation, privatization and liberalization.

Maza said she has prepared drafts of eight bills, foremost of which are the Omnibus Code on the Protection of Women, the repeal of the Reserve Officer Training Corps program, and a P3,000 wage increase for teachers nationwide.

Ocampo said he has been assured by Speaker Jose de Venecia that the Bayan Muna representatives would get seats in committees of their preference. Ocampo, a former political detainee, said he would like to be a member of the House committees on human rights, economic affairs, and defense.

Beltran said he would seek a seat in the committee on labor, while Maza wants to be in the committee on women and youth.

Ocampo said he would like to be addressed by his name in the protest movement, Ka Satur. Maza, on the other hand, said she preferred to be called simply Liza.

The Comelec, in a resolution signed by Benipayo and Commissioners Luzviminda Tancangco, Mehol Sadain, Rex Borra and Florentino Tuason Jr., proclaimed Bayan Muna on the basis of a Supreme Court resolution on Wednesday partially lifting the prohibition on the proclamation of winners in the May 14 party-list elections.

'Above-ground politics'

De Venecia yesterday hailed the proclamation of Bayan Muna as the first party-list winner for the 12th Congress, citing it as a "victory of above-ground politics."

"I welcome Bayan Muna's proclamation and its presence in Congress," said De Venecia.

The proclamation of Bayan Muna brings to 210 the total number of congressmen in the House.

De Venecia noted that Bayan Muna's representation in Congress would "contribute to the hastening of the peace process that has been stalled between the Macapagal administration and the National Democratic Front."

De Venecia said Bayan Muna's victory could signal the emergence of the communist party as a legitimate political party, just like in Europe in the '60s and '70s.

"We hope this will usher in an era of peace for our country, which will come with the completion of a final peace agreement between the government and the NDF, in which a formula will also emerge for the phasing out of the military arm of the NDF," he said. *With Rocky Nazareno*

2 more sectoral groups awaiting proclamation

BY GERALD G. LACUARTA AND ROCKY NAZARENO

AFTER the proclamation of Bayan Muna as a winning party-list group yesterday, the Comelec said it would submit a comment to the Supreme Court approving the proclamation of Akbayan and Luzon Farmers Party (Butil) representatives.

The two party-list groups got 2.5 percent and 2.2 percent, respectively, of the total ballots cast in the May 14 elections and are thus entitled to one seat each in the House of Representatives.

Bayan Muna, by virtue of its 1.7 million votes, or 11.3 percent of the total ballots cast, got three House seats.

Of the 10 winning party-list groups, only Bayan Muna, Akbayan and Butil have passed the criteria laid down by the SC on the qualifications for participation in the party-list polls.

The seven other groups—Mamamayan Ayaw sa Droga, the Association of Philippine Electric Cooperatives, the Veterans Federation Party, Abag Promdi, Nationalist People's Coalition, Lakas NUCD-UMDP, Citizen's Battle Against Corruption—were deemed disqualified by the Comelec.

The seven may only be proclaimed once the SC lifts the temporary restraining order on their proclamation.

New term

Comelec sources said the SC would only lift the TRO once the disqualification cases filed by Bayan Muna and Bagong Bayani against 17 party-list groups has been resolved.

"That could take a long time because the Comelec has not completed its compliance report on the qualifications of the 138 other party-list organizations," a Comelec lawyer said.

Five other party-list groups which passed the SC's criteria—Anak Mindanao (Amin), Alyansang Bayanihan ng mga Magsasaka, Manggagawang Bukid at Mangingisda (ABA), Sanlakas and Partido ng Manggagawa—are waiting to climb up in the rankings and get at least one House seat each, after the votes for disqualified groups shall have been voided.

The nominee of Akbayan is ex-Rep. Loretta Ann Rosales, while the one for Butil will be Benjamin Cruz.

In a statement, Rosales described Bayan Muna's proclamation as a "refreshing welcome for the 12th Congress."

Rosales, however, said the leftist party's proclamation might only "create confusion among our constituents, in particular, and the public, in general."

"Right now, for example, budget deliberations are ongoing and an early scrutiny and study of the issues surrounding our constituents is urgent, given the economic distress we are suffering," Rosales said.

Akbayan and Butil's wait for proclamation may soon come to an end, Rosales said.

"We were assured by the Comelec that it was requesting the lifting of the TRO for the proclamation of Butil and Akbayan (yesterday) afternoon," she said.

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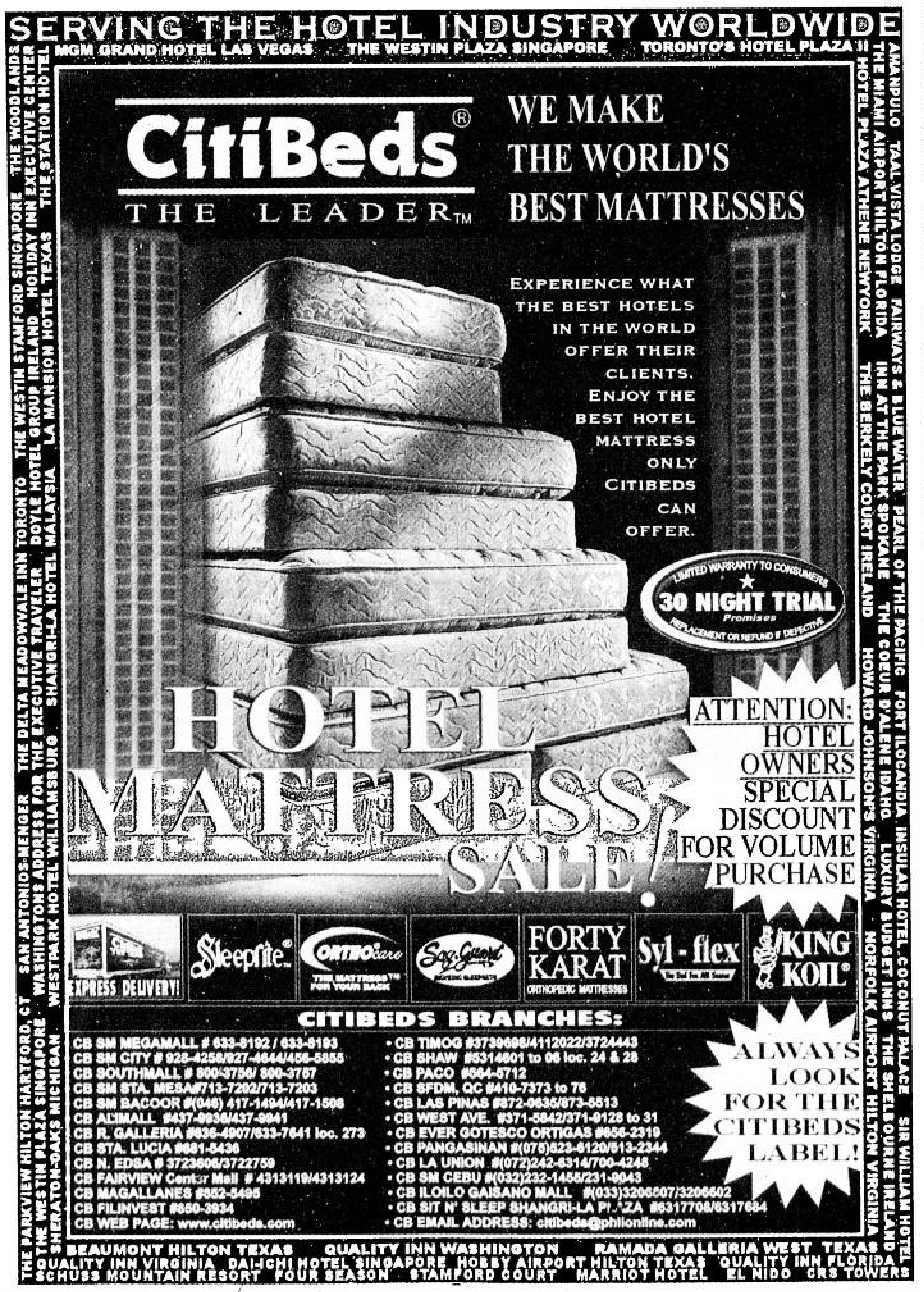
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SWS SURVEY

Gloria rating steady; Erap's takes plunge

By J. Javellana

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo has maintained her approval rating while her ousted predecessor, Joseph Estrada, suffered a decline in public trust and approval, according to the latest survey of the Social Weather Stations.

Ms Macapagal got a plus 16 net satisfaction rating in a survey conducted by the SWS on July 9-17 among 1,200 respondents nationwide. It had a margin of error of plus or minus 3 percent.

"The President's new satisfaction rating of plus 16 (corrected for rounding error), when compared to plus 18 on May 4-7 and plus 17 on April 19-23, indicates that her public support has been steady at a medium-favorable level, since April," the SWS said in a statement announcing the results.

It said, however, that Ms Macapagal's net approval rating was higher, at plus 24, in March or two months after she was swept into power by Edsa 2 that toppled Estrada from the presidency.

The President's plus 16 net satisfaction rating came from the 46 percent satisfied and the 29 percent dissatisfied with her performance as President. There was a 24 percent undecided.

The SWS said this was essentially the same as last May when 45 percent were satisfied and 27 percent were dissatisfied, for a net rating of plus 18. There was a 28 percent undecided during this month.

Between May and July this year, the SWS said the President's net satisfaction rating rose in the Visayas from plus 36 to plus 44 and in Mindanao, from plus 13 to plus 24.

But her ratings in Metro Manila declined from plus 27 to plus 9, an 18 percentage points decline, over the same period.

It said her ratings declined as well for the rest of Luzon, from plus 9 to plus 1. This decline offset the improvements in Visayas and Mindanao, it added.

The SWS said net satisfaction with the President was high not only in the middle/upper class ABC where she got plus 23 but even in the very poor class E which rated her plus 24. Class D, or the masses, gave her plus 12.

The SWS said this pattern, which was also seen in the May 2001 survey, suggests that the pattern of March and April 2001, when satisfaction with her was highest in class ABC and lowest in class E, was only temporary.

While her satisfaction rating was stable, the SWS noted that that of Estrada was headed for the gutter.

It said Estrada got a net trust rating (much trust minus little trust) of minus 5. This was obtained from the 37 percent who gave Estrada "much trust" to 42 percent who had "little trust" in him.

It said that Estrada's plus 11 on Jan. 6-9 occurred during the impeachment trial when he was still president

Reacting to the survey, Estrada said the dip in his net approval rating "could be the result of the massive and continuing black propaganda hurled against me in the media by the administration and the prosecution."

"As you all know, I am being denied access to media," he said in a press statement. "Hopefully, this would improve as the trial begins when I will be able to present my side. This, of course, is contingent on media giving my side equal space and time."

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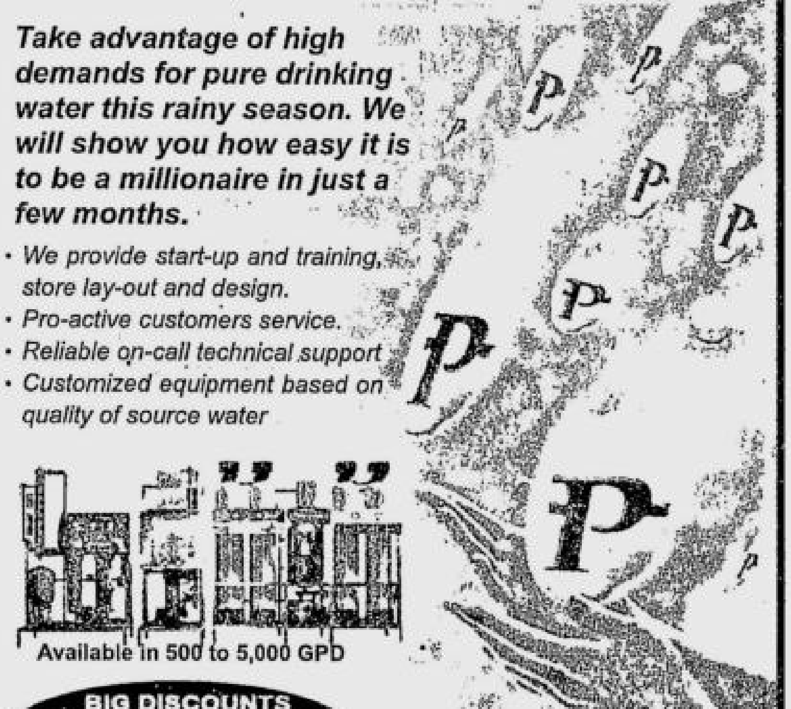

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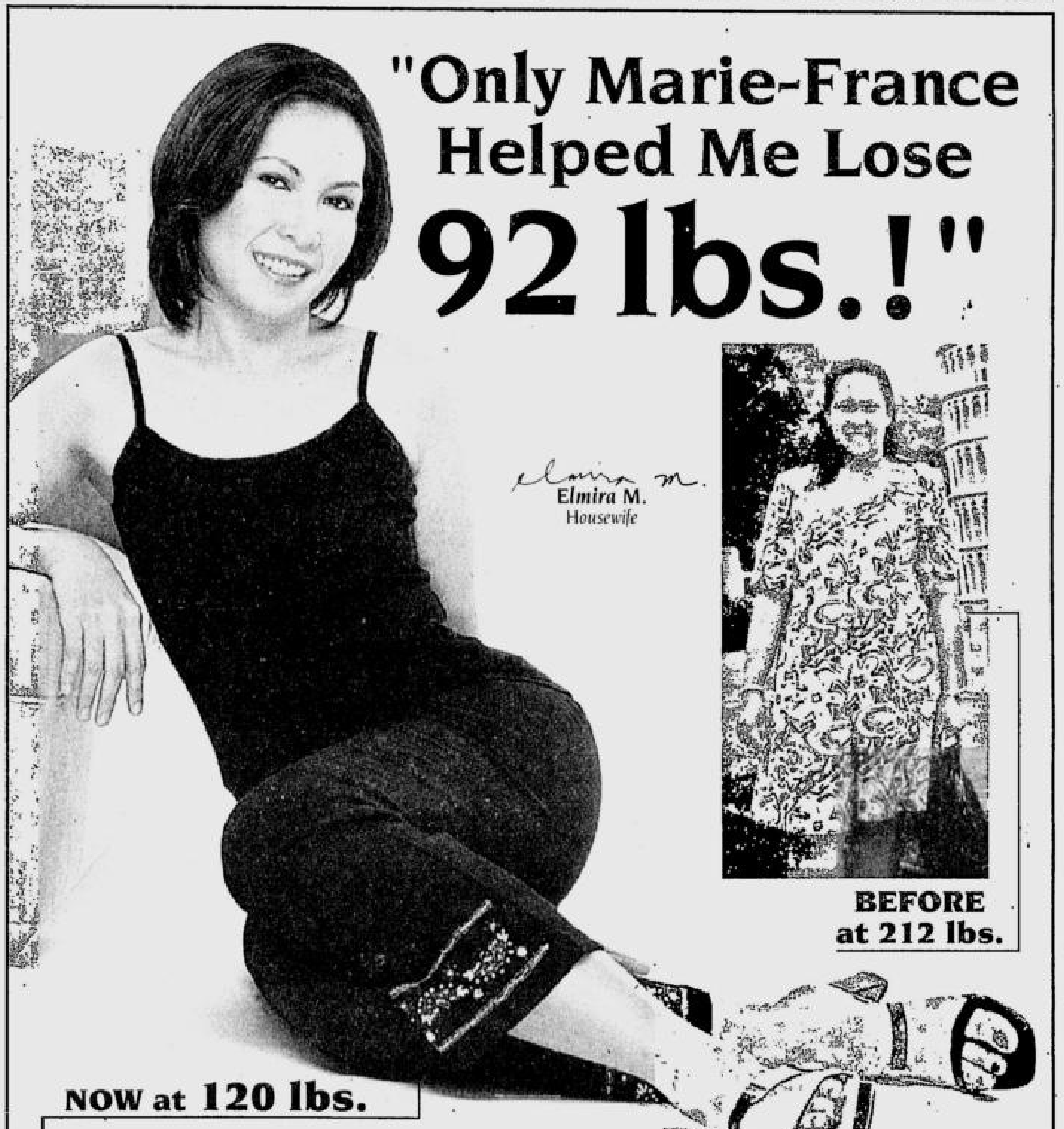

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Lacson urges PNP aides to come home

By Armand N. Nocum

SEN. Panfilo Lacson yesterday appealed on his former Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force aides, Senior Superintendents Michael Ray Aquino and Cesar Mancao, to come home to face charges against them.

In a radio interview, he said the decision of the two to leave the country amid accusations of various crimes is not working to their advantage.

"I just hope they will return because it is a bad implication for them to have left the country," Lacson said in a radio interview.

He said he did not know about their plans to leave the country, but he explained that they may have done so out of fear of a possible shakedown by the Macapagal administration.

Asked whether he was willing to take them in as part of his Senate staff, he said this is unlikely since they are currently assigned with the Philippine National Police.

"But if they are out of service and they need jobs and I have use of them, why not? They can be a consultant or member of the staff," he said.

But as long as they are with the PNP, he said he cannot have them, unless they are detailed in his office.

Meanwhile, Lacson accused Budget Secretary Emilia Boncodin of sitting on his application for the release of his P1.7 million retirement benefit.

"They're not answering my call or my letter," he said of his efforts to ask Boncodin to release his benefits.

"I have earned that in my 30 years in police service. Are they going to deny that to me just because I'm a member of opposition or their biggest enemy in opposition?" he asked.

Asked whether he plans to use the money should he run for president in 2004, he said he will use the money to feed his family.

He said he was also adjusting to life as an opposition senator.

"I have to live with fact that I'm with the opposition. I am not entitled to all rights," he lamented.

MONEY LAUNDERING HEARINGS

Congress to call BSP heads

By Christine Avendano

BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas Gov. Rafael Buenaventura and his predecessor, Gabriel Singson, are among the experts who will be invited next week when the Senate and House conduct joint hearings on an anti-money laundering bill that government wants to rush in Congress.

Sen. Ramon Magsaysay Jr., chair of the banks committee said yesterday that the joint hearings have been scheduled to start on Aug. 22. The committees on banks, on justice and on human rights are tasked to oversee the hearings of the anti-money laundering bill in the Senate.

But Senate President Franklin Drilon said that the joint hearings would be limited only to hearing out the experts' advice on the issue. After the hearings, both chambers will make their own committee reports.

Conducting joint hearings on the measure, Magsaysay said, would improve its chances of being approved by both chambers immediately.

"The anti-money laundering bill is being prioritized by the administration simply because the global economy has become so pervasive," he told reporters.

He added that the sooner the Philippines will have this law "the more integrity our banking system will have."

Buenaventura and Singson were among the experts that Congress has invited as resource speakers.

He said Sen. Francis Pangilinan, who is chair of the justice and human rights committee, will share data about the other money laundering laws in other countries and other information to be gathered from government and private sectors.

Magsaysay also gave assurances that the joint hearings would address the concern of some sectors for bank confidentiality, particularly their fears that the new law would be used to harass depositors.

Executive and congressional leaders resolved the other day to pass an anti-money laundering law to remove the country from a blacklist of countries facing international sanctions for being a haven of dirty money.

The Financial Action Task Force named 15 "non-cooperative countries and territories," including the Philippines, which have "made inadequate progress to fight money laundering."

The Philippines was given by the Paris-based money-laundering watchdog until Sept. 30 to pass an anti-money laundering act to conform to the internationally accepted financial legislation.

Ping finds P1M libel fee too stiff

SEN. Panfilo Lacson said yesterday there would be a slight delay in his filing of a libel suit against military intelligence chief Col. Victor Corpus over the latter's claims that he had stashed money coming from money laundering activities and the illegal drug trade in several bank accounts abroad.

Lacson said at the weekly breakfast forum at the Holiday Inn in Manila that he found the filing fee of P1 million for his libel suit too hefty for him.

He said he told his lawyer that they need to talk about what "adjustments" they can make over this problem.

"I'm not saying I don't have P1 million but we also have other needs to spend for and not just to put it in court and let it sleep there for so many years," Lacson told reporters in Filipino.

But he said that he would definitely file a libel suit against his detractors for "demeaning my person and destroying my reputation without basis."

Asked to comment on reports that the charges against him were to prevent him from running as president in 2004, Lacson said he has at present no plans to run for the post.

Teachers get tax refund

By B. Rivera

SOME 8,000 public school teachers have finally received their long overdue tax refunds from the Bureau of Internal Revenue after years of waiting.

Education Secretary Raul Roco said it was "the first time in years" that the BIR has returned a percentage of the withholding taxes deducted from the government faculty.

He said the 8,000 teachers represented the first batch of those who would be getting their refunds within the year.

"So if there are those who have not yet received their tax refund, just wait awhile, and it will come," Roco said during a press briefing Wednesday.

He said it was the job of the Department of Budget and Management, which has been attending to the financial welfare of public school teachers.

Roco said the DBM has been supportive of the DECS' projects, such as the temporary suspension of the collection of withholding taxes of teachers.

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August 15, 2001

Honorable **Mayor LITO ATIENZA**
City Mayor of Manila

An Appeal to Defend and Protect Health and Welfare for the People of Manila

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In 2001, the Makati City enacted an Ordinance which regulate the installation of all Cellular/Micro-Wave Antenna Cell-sites. What will happen to our beautiful Manila if most of the cellular phone company installed their Cellular/Micro-Wave Antenna in the street post of Manila. I pledge to our Honorable Mayor with his **Honest and Noble Cause** to regulate and prevent any permit issued without proper supporting documents and to enforce all ordered to dismantle all installation of cell-sites which was approved thru **misrepresentation.**

WILSON CHUA
Barangay Chairman
Barangay 287, Zone 27
District III

ADVT

Ombudsman drops probe of Mike Arroyo

By Michael Lim Ubac

THE OFFICE of the Ombudsman has found no evidence to link First Gentleman Mike Arroyo to the recent telecoms franchise scandal.

Investigators from the Office of the Ombudsman said it was futile to continue with their probe of Arroyo since no one was willing to talk against the President's spouse.

Desierto was careful not to make it appear his office has cleared Arroyo of any involvement in the scandal.

"We have not (cleared Arroyo). What we're saying is there's no evidence to place him under a formal investigation at the moment," he said.

The investigation into the administrative liability of government officials, particularly those from the Department of Transportation and Communications, in the controversy would continue, Desierto said.

He said the Ombudsman's investigation was not zeroing in on personalities but was more concerned with the "incident"—the alleged payment of a bribe to have a presidential veto overturned.

Overall Deputy Ombudsman Margarito Gervacio said a preliminary inquiry failed to establish any evidence suggesting the First Gentleman played a role in the controversy.

"There was no evidence to link him to any criminal activity," Gervacio said. "There was no evidence to speak of to continue investigating him at this point."

Arroyo has flatly denied allegations he and three others took up to P50 million to convince the President to recall her veto of a bill that would have granted exclusive rights to charge fees to a particular telecommunications firm.

Desierto, however, did not close the door on a probe of the First Gentleman. "The investigation is open. But we will have to proceed with what we have now," he said.

The controversy erupted when the President's correspondence secretary, Veronica Rodrigo, had supposedly implicated Arroyo and the others in the bribery attempt.

Rodrigo was supposed to have also introduced former DOTC consultant Malou Nuñez to presidential legislative adviser Gabriel Claudio. Nuñez was reportedly one of those lobbying to recall the veto of the telecoms bill.

Rodrigo pointed to Nuñez as the source of the bribery allegations against Arroyo. Nuñez said she only learned of the P50 million bribe from a text message.

Gervacio said the retraction by the two of their statements left the Ombudsman with no evidence to link Arroyo to the scandal.

"There's no evidence except for hearsay evidence, which cannot hold water and is not a valid basis for an investigation," he said.

Desierto refused to name the other DOTC officials who had lobbied to recall President Macapagal-Arroyo's veto.

As for the criminal aspect of the case, Desierto said: "To determine if (there was) a criminal offense will be another matter. We will have to determine if there was an attempt to persuade anyone to commit an offense. If there was such an attempt, then it could fall under Section 3 of the Anti-Graft Law," he said.

Sex slaves seek justice from Japan

FILIPINAS forced to work as sex slaves for the Japanese army during World War Two said on yesterday they wanted more cash compensation for their suffering and they wanted it quickly.

About 20 elderly women rallied in front of the gates of the Japanese Embassy as a drizzle fell and curious onlookers stopped to listen.

Their 40-minute protest was held a day after the 56th anniversary of the Japanese surrender to US-led allied forces marking the end of the war—an anniversary that once again focused attention on Japan's wartime human rights record.

"We are here again to fight for our rights," Remedios Pellas from Leyte, one of the areas, which saw heavy fighting during the war, shouted as guards watched from behind the embassy gates.

The women had placards reading: "We condemn wars of aggression and invasion"; "Enact compensation bill now"; and "Asian Women's Fund is not enough."

This year's anniversary has been dominated by Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi's visit on Monday to a controversial shrine to Japan's war dead, which sparked outcry in China and North and South Korea.

Internal matter

The Philippine government described the visit as an internal matter.

Tokyo has not paid direct compensation to any of the estimated 200,000 mostly Asian women forced to work in brothels for the Japanese military before and during World War Two, saying all claims were settled by peace treaties.

Instead, in 1995, Tokyo set up the Asian Women's Fund, a private group with heavy government support, to make cash payments to all surviving wartime sex slaves.

"We are very old and wish to spend our last few years in peace after attaining justice," said Narcisa Claveria, 73-year-old vice president of Lila-Pilipina Inc, a group of so-called "comfort women" which organized yesterday's rally.

"The Japanese government cannot expect us to be content with our acceptance of the Asian Women's Fund."

"This is just atonement money in fulfillment of their moral obligations. This does not absolve the Japanese government of their legal responsibilities," she said.

A Japanese court last December rejected a lawsuit filed by nearly 50 elderly Philippine women demanding cash compensation and it failed to recognize their suffering or acknowledge that the army's treatment of the woman violated international treaties. *Reuters*

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PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo with former Presidents Fidel Ramos and Corazon Aquino.

'Humility means forgiving'

By Juliet L. Javellana

A FORGIVING president is how President Macapagal-Arroyo described herself during the annual National Prayer Breakfast yesterday where she also called for national unity to weather the economic crisis besetting the nation.

The President, who has been in power for six months, again extended the olive branch to her detractors, some of whom she held responsible for the bold May 1 siege of Malacañang.

"What does it mean to humble ourselves?" the President told a gathering also attended by former Presidents Fidel Ramos and Corazon Aquino, Senate President Franklin Drilon, Speaker Jose de Venecia, Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. and other personalities.

"For me, it means staying detached from the trappings and perks of power. It means reaching out to those who still carry hatred or cynicism in their heart. It means forgiving those who have done wrong rather than using my power to do vengeance upon them," she said, dwelling on a passage from 2 Chronicles 7:14 read by Ms Aquino.

The President said the hurts between the administration and the opposition would be healed "if we show in our actions that while no one is above the law, yet no one in power exacts vengeance on the vanquished."

"He will heal the cancer within the civil society and the minor but multitude of players of Edsa 3 if we turn away from sanctimony. He will heal the prejudice within the middle forces and the lumpen if we comprehend rather than condescend," she added.

The President prayed for discernment between prosecution and persecution.

She also called on other leaders and the people to pray for her as she labors to improve the lives of the poorest of the poor.

The President proposed to make this week a week of prayer and fasting for the country.

"Indeed, our land needs so much healing. But I give thanks to the Lord that healing will probably be made easier from now on because the mainstream of our society is united," she said.

The results of the May 14 elections, as well as the plebiscite for the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, prove this, she added.

"It shows in the eroded capability of those who have been seeking to grab or re-grab power. It shows in the way that the masses have been responding to our outreach," she said.

The President said the unity is also manifested in the economy and the performance of the government. She cited the Bureau of Internal Revenue's exceeding its targets.

Ms Macapagal said that to date, the government can still "overspend" P11 billion without overshooting the projected budget deficit.

"But the healing that our land needs today is not really among the mainstream. It is... between those in the mainstream and those in the margins," she said.

In his speech, Ramos also called for unity to save "our ship of state."

"The times in which we live have been full of woes and suffering that can exhaust the human spirit, and we are all anxious about the prospects of immediate reform in the most worrisome aspects of our national life," Ramos said.

He said there was no time for bickering and divided reactions to the problems plaguing the nation.

Nacorda dared: Prove charges

By Julie Alipala-Inot
and Jonathan F. Ma
PDI Mindanao Bureau

LAMITAN, Basilan—Two of the military officers accused by Fr. Cirilo Nacorda of having connived with the Abu Sayyaf dared the priest to prove his allegations in court.

Brig. Gen. Romeo Dominguez told the Inquirer he would stop issuing statements on the controversy "until both the Senate and House investigations are completed."

"I respect and welcome the investigations and I hope the priest can prove his accusations," Dominguez said.

Capt. Nicolas Quemado admitted he was stunned when Nacorda implicated him.

Quemado said he was on sick leave during the siege of Lamitan on June 2. He admitted, however, that he cut short his leave to report for duty in the Basilan town.

Nacorda continues to maintain that they and other military officers connived with the Abu Sayyaf to allow the bandit group to escape certain capture for a price.

He said he has become increasingly concerned for the safety of his witnesses, after noting heightened efforts to reportedly stop them from testifying.

"I fear for their lives, they don't have anything to protect themselves," Fr. Nacorda said.

Nacorda said that even if he wanted to prove his allegations, he would not attend the Senate inquiry on the Lamitan siege on Monday.

Come to Lamitan

He challenged the senators to come to Basilan instead and conduct their inquiry in Lamitan.

"It will not solve anything if the inquiry is held in Manila. At least here, they will be able to see where the hostage crisis took place. They will see the back of the hospital compound where the Abu Sayyaf escaped," he said.

The main reason he was not going to Manila to attend the Senate inquiry, he said, was that his "witnesses could not afford to go to Manila" because of the expense involved.

Sen. Ramon Magsaysay Jr., Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes and Msgr. Socrates Villegas are set to fly to Basilan today to try and convince Nacorda to attend the Senate hearings in Manila.

Magsaysay, chair of the Senate committee on national defense and security, said he has postponed the hearing on Aug. 20 after Nacorda relayed his preference to have the inquiry held in Basilan.

Assurance

"We are planning to visit Nacorda and the other witnesses to assure (them) of security if and when they come for the public hearings," Magsaysay told reporters.

Asked if the Senate could compel Nacorda to come to Manila, Magsaysay said he'd rather see the priest first and assess what steps should be taken.

But he said some senators, mostly members of his committee, were willing to go to Zamboanga City to "meet (Nacorda) halfway."

In Zamboanga City, Col. Jovenal Narcise, former commanding officer of the 103rd Infantry Brigade, dismissed Nacorda's allegations as untrue.

"I vehemently deny the allegations made by Fr. Nacorda against me, General Dominguez and three junior officers. They're not true," Narcise said.

Narcise was officer-in-charge of the 103rd IB when the siege of Lamitan occurred. "My conscience is clear," he told reporters. ***With Christine O. Avendaño; Joselle Badilla, PDI Mindanao Bureau***

Mark Jimenez faces 100 years

MANILA Rep. Mark Jimenez could face up to 100 years in prison if he is convicted of the crimes for which the United States is seeking his extradition, a Philippine government official said Thursday.

Jimenez is wanted by the US government for tax evasion to the tune of about $3.5 million, wire fraud, conspiracy to commit fraud, issuing false statements to the government and making illegal contributions to the Democratic Party.

The offenses were allegedly committed between 1994 and 1998. Jimenez was indicted in a Florida court in 1999.

"He will face more than 100 years imprisonment if he is found guilty of the 47 counts against him. These are not exactly light charges," Justice Undersecretary Merceditas Gutierrez told the Supreme Court, which she asked to cancel the bail granted to the fugitive.

A Manila court had ordered Jimenez's arrest but allowed him to post bail of P1 million. The court has ordered his lawyers and government prosecutors to appear before it on Aug. 31 for a "pre-trial conference."

"There is the likelihood of flight. We could just draw negative conclusions," Gutierrez said.

Jimenez was a former adviser on Latin American affairs to deposed President Joseph Estrada. He has offered to turn state witness against his former patron, who is charged with plunder, perjury, graft and other crimes.

US Embassy charge d'affaires Michael Malinowski has asked Manila to speed up the extradition process and make Jimenez the first fugitive to be returned to the US under an extradition treaty with the Philippines.

"They are asking that a Filipino be sent to America. Not just an ordinary Filipino, but one who is a congressman," Justice Secretary Hernando Perez said in a radio interview.

"We are doing our best and we hope they won't complain about how the justice department is trying to uphold this treaty," Perez said.

Malacañang said yesterday it hopes the case against Jimenez is resolved soon so it could act on his extradition.

"We're hoping the Supreme Court comes out with its decision swiftly. We really can't afford a delay," presidential spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao said at a press briefing yesterday.

"Whether the Supreme Court upholds Jimenez or not, the President's hands are tied. (The absence of a) Supreme Court decision (is) the only thing that's delaying his extradition," Tiglao said.

Martin P. Marfil, with an AFP report

BIR doubles withholding tax on film stars, cagers

BIG-EARNING actors, basketball players and their likes who are also suspected of rampantly evading taxes will be required starting this month to increase by 100 percent their withholding taxes.

Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho said the increase in the withholding taxes to be paid by professional entertainers, professional athletes, stage and movie directors from 10 to 20 percent does not mean that the government was raising taxes on these individuals.

"This is not an increase in taxes because only Congress can legislate an increase in taxes. The finance secretary was authorized to increase what we call a creditable withholding tax," said Camacho.

The new BIR regulation may come as a blow to the entertainment industry that had been suffering from lower earnings.

A withholding tax deducted in advance from an individual is eventually subtracted from the final tax that a taxpayer eventually remits to the government during tax payment season.

Specified as covered by the increase are professional entertainers such as actors and actresses, singers and emcees; professional athletes including basketball players, pelotaris, and jockeys; all directors involved in movies, stage, radio, television, and musical productions.

Nene vows responsible opposition

By Armand N. Nocum

SEN. Aquilino Pimentel Jr. yesterday said they are willing to grant the President's wish for the opposition to take a more conciliatory posture relative to its dealings with the Macapagal administration.

But he said this does not mean that they are dropping their critical stance as opposition men.

"She will have that," he said of the call for unity and cooperation the President made in a breakfast-prayer meeting yesterday morning.

But he said this does not mean that they are closing their eyes on alleged anomalies or "lapses in policy directions" of the Macapagal administration.

"It is important for the opposition group to point out vital areas of concern," he said. "We will try to be a very responsible opposition."

He said they will "not oppose for the sake of opposing."

Asked to name a lapse in policy direction, he pointed to the declaration of a state of emergency in Basilan, which reportedly resulted in alleged rights violations.

Jailed Pinay home to hero's welcome

By TJ Burgonio

DOMESTIC helper Mary Jane Ramos, who killed the Arab employer who had tried to rape her, received a hero's welcome at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport on her arrival Wednesday night.

Ramos, 23, was met by a handful of government officials, including First Gentleman Mike Arroyo, on her return from the United Arab Emirates.

As she stepped out of Naia Terminal 1, the petite woman was greeted with chants of "*Mabuhay ang migranteng Pilipino* (Long live the migrant Filipino)" by some 60 members of Migrante International.

Ramos, who was away for two years, broke into tears on seeing her husband, Johnny, 23, and their 3-year-old son, John Mark.

She was also elated to see her parents, Pedro and Esperanza Esteban, in the crowd outside the terminal.

"I'm happy to be back because from now on I'll be with my family," said the sobbing Ramos.

She said she will not go abroad to work again. "I don't want to go back. I just wish to work here."

Arroyo and Owwa Administrator Wilhelm Soriano said they will provide livelihood training for both Ramos and her farmer-husband, and a scholarship for their son.

Ramos thanked Arroyo, government officials and others who raised the P2.3 million "diyah" or blood money that facilitated her release from prison.

Arroyo, who had been approached by Ramos' father, spearheaded the campaign to raise the blood money.

"We're happy that we were able to bring her home," Arroyo said.

Ramos will undergo debriefing and counseling at the Department of Social Welfare and Development.

Ramos, of San Agustin, Isabela, flew to the UAE in January 1999 to work as a maid for Muhammad al Shamsi and his Filipino wife.

On her second day at work, Al Shamsi tried to sexually assault her while his wife was away. Ramos fought him off and stabbed him to death.

She was charged with murder but was acquitted by a shari'a court in the emirate of Ras Al Khaimah.

On appeal by the victim's relatives, the appellate court reversed the lower court's decision and ordered Ramos to serve two years in prison and pay the victim's heirs 150,000 dirhams.

Since she had been detained for two years during the duration of the trial, she was only asked to pay the blood money.

MINORITIES AT THE PALACE

Barbed wire guards the entrance to Malacañang Palace (below) as members of the cultural minorities stage a protest against the Mining Act of 1995, which they claimed, has adversely affected indigenous peoples. The protest coincided with the celebration of the National Minorities Week.

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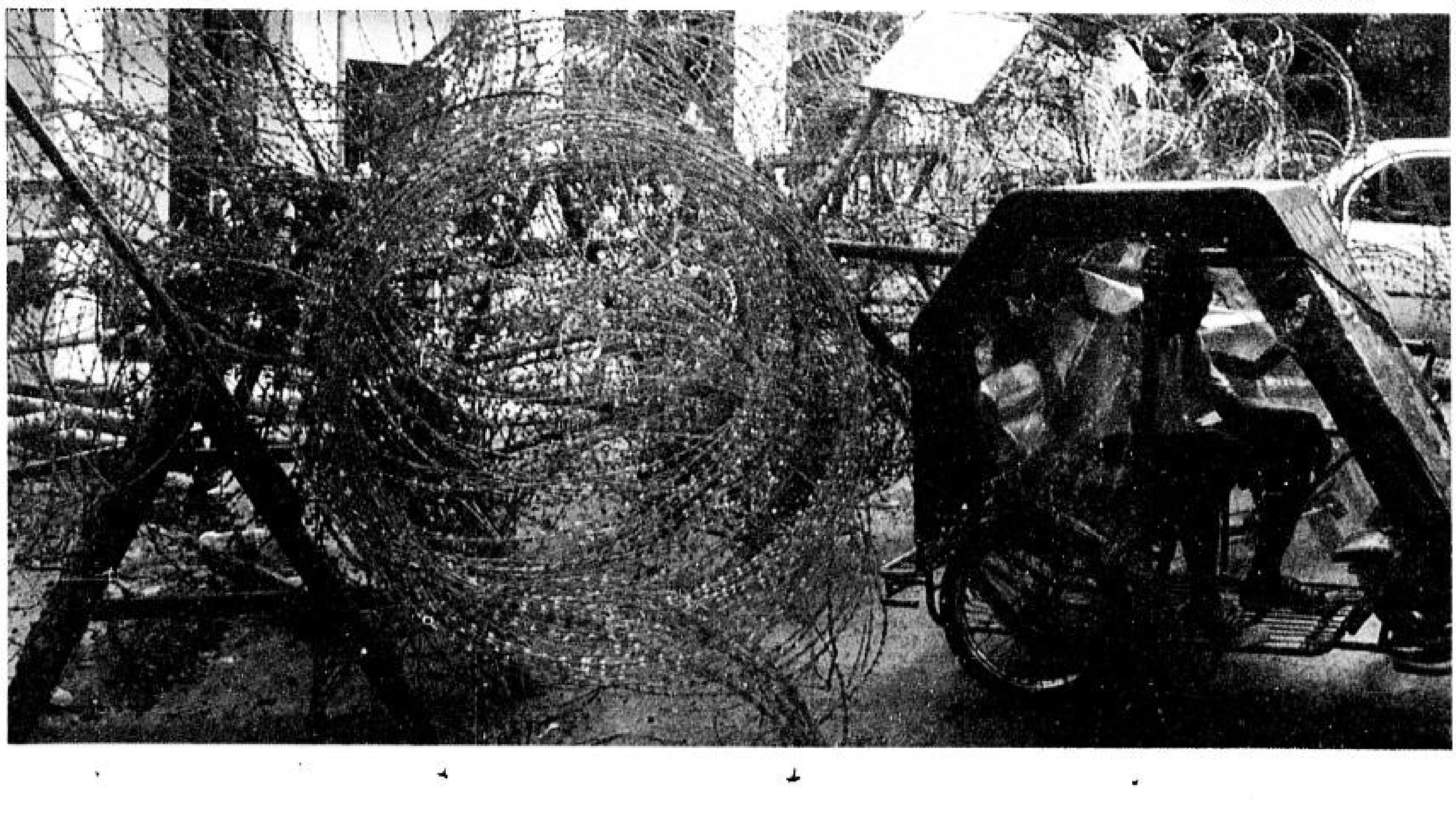

GMA sees Basilan, 2 cities in ARMM

(From page A1)

if the Muslim majority in Marawi and Cotabato cities elected to join the ARMM, even if the other cities and provinces opted out.

Ms Macapagal campaigned in 11 provinces and 14 cities for their inclusion in the ARMM that at present covers only Maguindanao, Sulu, Tawi-Tawi and Lanao del Sur provinces.

Through an expansion of the Muslim autonomy area, she hopes to entice the Moro Islamic Liberation Front in abandoning its armed struggle for a separate Islamic state and accepting a peace accord with Manila.

But Cotabato City Councilor Noel Felongco, who campaigned for a "no" vote, denounced Ms Macapagal's announcement as "premature."

"How come Malacañang has announced that "yes" won here when the city board of canvassers has not convened yet?"

Fr. Eliseo Mercado, president of the Notre Dame University in Cotabato City, said there was "a grand plan to include Cotabato and Marawi cities, as well as Basilan, in the ARMM whether the people like it or not."

"That's wrong," said Mercado, a peace advocate who opposed the holding of the plebiscite.

Basilan

Former Basilan Rep. Alvin Dans also questioned the outcome of the Aug. 14 plebiscite in his province.

"In peaceful areas like Lamitan and Isabela, the turnout was low. But in areas that have an existing peace and order problem, the turnout was high. It seems the results are questionable," said Dans who also once served as interior undersecretary.

But Basilan Rep. Gerry Salapuddin, who campaigned hard for a yes vote in the province, was elated over the outcome.

"Although Gov. Nur Misuari failed to bring progress and development in the four provinces already included in the ARMM, the people of Basilan wants to give autonomy a chance to work," Salapuddin told the INQUIRER.

Jose Joson, assistant director for operations of the Commission on Elections that conducted the plebiscite, said initial results showed about 70 percent of the votes cast in Basilan favored joining the ARMM.

Joson said about 80 percent of Basilan's votes had been counted, but he could not give specific figures.

According to him, the vote showed a wide divergence in the sentiments of the Muslim majority and Christian minority in Basilan.

Joson said the two Basilan towns with Christian majorities—Isabela City and Lamitan town—voted against joining the ARMM while five towns with Muslim majorities voted to join.

Because Isabela is a chartered city with special privileges, it may not be included in the ARMM even if it is the capital of Basilan, Joson said.

Cotabato City

Arturo Cocjin, chair of the Cotabato City board of canvassers, said the other members of the board could not be contacted.

But Prosecutor Jose Ruben Bagasao, vice chair of the board, and Schools Superintendent Ibrahim Guiapar, a board member, said they had been waiting for Cocjin at the City Hall so the canvassing could begin.

Cocjin said he had talked to Comelec Chair Alfredo Benipayo and reported why the board could not be convened. Later, he requested that he be relieved as board chair because of pressures he did not specify.

Fr. Jose Colin Bagaforo of the Concerned Citizens of Cotabato led some 1,000 people in staging a noise barrage in front of the City Hall yesterday afternoon.

The protesters also burned a streamer used in welcoming President Macapagal when she visited the city recently.

Only about half of the 4.9 million eligible voters took part in the plebiscite, largely due to the stormy weather and rumors of Moro rebel attacks.

Poll supervisors were forced to declare a failure of plebiscite in some towns of Sultan Kudarat and Palawan.

The ARMM covers about 4 percent of the country's territory, but contributes just 0.9 percent of national economic output. Nearly 70 percent of its 2.2 million residents live below the poverty line.

The plebiscite sought to enlarge the ARMM territory from its current 12,034.8 square kilometers to 68,000 square kilometers.

Majority of the Christians in Mindanao and some Muslim sectors believe that Misuari had failed to improve the economy of the ARMM in nearly five years in charge.

Although the region gets to keep 70 percent of taxes collected, with the balance going to the national government, many residents of the south do not want to fall under the Islamic judicial system.

The ARMM was set up in 1989 to help convince the former separatist group Moro National Liberation Front led by Nur Misuari to the negotiating table. In 1996, Misuari signed a peace deal with Manila and was later elected ARMM governor.

The 12,500-strong MILF, which broke away from the MNLF, was left out of the peace accord, but has resumed peace talks with the Macapagal administration. *With reports from Edwin O. Fernandez, Charlie C. Señase, Aquiles Z. Zonio, Lullie A. Micabalo, Jonathan F. Ma, Grace Cantal-Albasin, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

No suspects . . .

(From page A1)

said yesterday.

The Australian Embassy reacted to a statement by Perez the other day that the surviving Gonzales son, 20-year-old Sef, was a suspect.

"We have been advised by the New South Wales Police . . . that police inquiries are ongoing and that the investigating task force (Task Force Tawas) has not yet reached a conclusion in the case," read the embassy statement.

The embassy added that the police are getting "good cooperation from the public, including from members of the Gonzales family."

Lawyer Ted Gonzales, his wife Mary Josephine Loiva and 18-year-old daughter Clodine were brutally murdered inside their home in North Ryde, Sydney, on July 10.

Sef, a law student, discovered their bodies upon coming home late that night. He has been under protective police custody since then.

Philippine authorities have conveyed to their Australian counterparts their concern over the case since the Gonzaleses were Filipino nationals who became naturalized Australian citizens.

Perez was quoted as saying over radio dzRH the other day that "it is true that (Sef) is one of the suspects" in the multiple murder.

Perez was reportedly quoting a report submitted by a team of National Bureau of Investigation agents who were sent to Sydney to "assist" the Australian police in their probe.

The secretary admitted that the report had "yet to be officially declared."

NBI Director Reynaldo Wycoco has not disclosed the report of the NBI team led by regional director Rickson Chiong. But in an interview on Tuesday, he was quoted as saying that the suspect "could be a Filipino who became an Australian (citizen)."

He did not elaborate.

Soon, cloned . . .

(From page A1)

are attempting to clone chickens on a huge scale, moving factory farming into a new era but alarming animal welfare activists, the New Scientist magazine reported on Wednesday.

A breakthrough is some way off but the US National Institute of Science and Technology has given Origen Therapeutics from California and Embrex in North Carolina $4.7 million to fund research.

Factory farming of chickens, which are often pumped full of antibiotics and kept in cramped conditions, already causes outrage within the animal welfare lobby.

But the poultry industry would welcome disease-resistant birds that grow faster on less food.

"Producers would like the same meat quantity but to use reduced inputs to get there," Mike Fitzgerald of Origen told the magazine.

The company aims to breed or genetically engineer a chicken with the required traits and then "bulk-grow" embryonic stem cells taken from fertilized eggs as soon as they are laid.

Those cells will then be injected into the embryo of a fertilized recipient egg.

Origen has a patent on the process still at the application stage. Embrex produces machines that can inject vaccines into up to 50,000 eggs an hour, the magazine said.

If the process ever reaches fruition, Origen plans to freeze stem cells from different strains of chicken, allowing millions of eggs to be produced in months.

"Billions of clones could be produced each year to supply chicken farms with birds that all grow at the same rate, have the same amount of meat and taste the same," the magazine said. *With a Reuters report*

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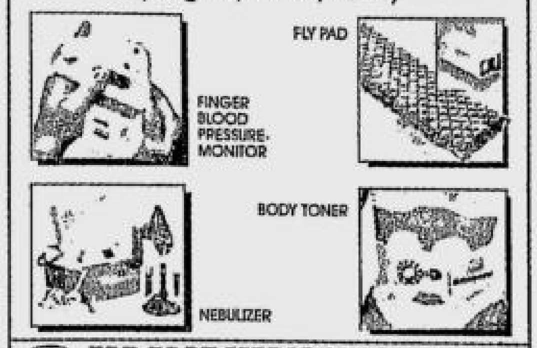

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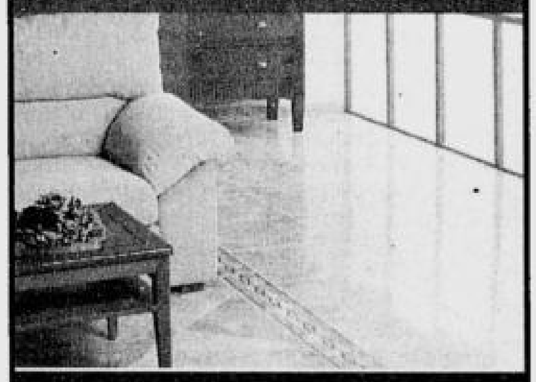

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OPINION

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EDITORIALS

Wrong Wong

FOR THE FIRST time since Col. Victor Corpus came out publicly to accuse him of high crimes, Sen. Panfilo Lacson was on the offensive. "Wow, *mali*!" Lacson commented almost gleefully Wednesday when he noted that Corpus had shown to the media the wrong picture of Chinese-Filipino businessman Kim Wong. Had he done "a little homework," Lacson suggested, Corpus would have gotten the right picture from one of several restaurants Wong owned. "My friend Wong never wore a tie," he added.

Lacson's friend was exposed a day earlier by Corpus as the financier and purchasing agent of a syndicate that had allegedly shipped into the country some P250 billion worth of illegal drugs, either for sale locally or for transshipment to other destinations like the United States. Wong had links to the Hong Kong Triad, and he also served as the point man in influencing Filipino judges and legislators, according to the chief of the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines. And Lacson himself was "the lord of all drug lords," Corpus said.

The problem was that Corpus showed to the media the picture of the wrong man. Instead of Wong, the man in the picture turned out to be lawyer Stephen Villaflor, a member of the staff of Sen. Robert Barbers. Corpus had to apologize the next day to Villaflor, saying the error was due to a computer glitch.

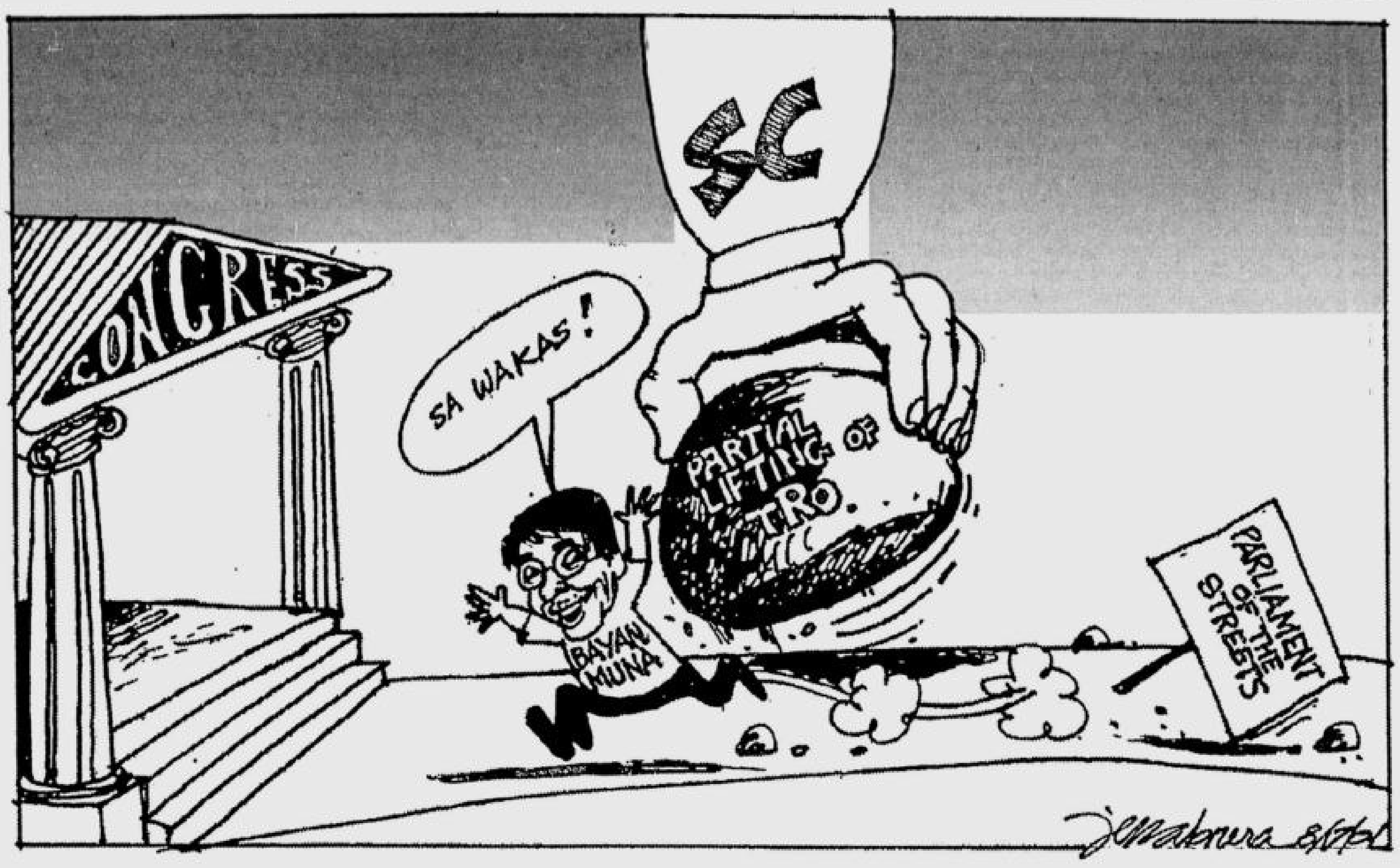
That error was, of course, a major embarrassment for Corpus. What made it worse was that it might have dented the credibility of the government's investigation into the alleged criminal activities of Lacson. Now some people are saying that if Corpus, who is leading the investigation, could err about something as basic as a suspect's photograph, then he could be wrong about the multimillion-dollar bank accounts of Lacson as well as his alleged involvement in the drug trade and several unsolved killings, like that of publicist Salvador Dacer.

However, the biggest damage wrought by this sorry episode may be on the whole investigation itself. The day his name appeared in the newspapers, Wong vigorously denied that he was ever involved with the Triad or that he ever dealt with drugs. "I am not a drug lord," he protested. "I do not belong to any Hong Kong Triad...I just happen to be a friend of Sen. Panfilo Lacson." For a man who describes him as "just an ordinary businessman," Wong lost no time getting far enough to be beyond the reach of the law. That very same day, he flew to Hong Kong, explaining that he feared for his life after he was visited by Corpus' men. But he also promised to come back and testify in an official inquiry. Lacson also said Wong would surely be back since he had to attend to his many businesses.

Premature disclosure

IF Wong does come back, that would be a big surprise. People who could provide vital testimony linking Lacson to some controversial activities seem to have a habit of turning up in places where the government investigators cannot reach them. For instance, Eduardo de los Reyes, the policeman who boldly came forward to declare that the killing of 11 suspected Kuratong Baleleng gang members was not a shootout but a rubout, eventually lost heart and fled to a more comfortable life in Canada. Only last month, two of Lacson's most trusted men in the Philippine National Police, Senior Superintendents Cesar Mancao and Michael Ray Aquino, who are believed to have played key roles in the Dacer murder, have slipped out of the country and are now believed to be hiding in the United States. Others, who supposedly knew too much about Lacson's activities, were simply dispatched to parts unknown, if Lacson's accusers are to be believed.

All these only make Corpus' premature disclosure of the Wong investigation look amateurish and foolish. The escape of Mancao and Aquino was too recent for him to have forgotten that they still managed to slip away despite a standing order issued by the Department of Justice to stop their departure. No hold-departure order was issued against Wong and so he just sailed through the immigration counter at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport. Now the government has lost not only a key witness against Lacson but the other principal in what Corpus has dubbed as the biggest drug-trafficking syndicate in the country. And all because Corpus was too eager to reveal the sins of Lacson, real or still to be substantiated.



Money, money, money for all short story writers

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

IT'S definite: the Metrorail will be extended from North Edsa to Monumento to connect with the older Light Rail Transit. The elevated rail line will therefore be one complete loop: from Monumento on Rizal and Taft Avenues to Baclaran, and from there north on Edsa back to Monumento.

The problem will be what to do with the Bonifacio Monument from which Monumento got its name. It will be in the way of the elevated rail which will be extended to Valenzuela and beyond. There is no other way out except to transfer it to another site where it will be better appreciated.

The present site used to be perfect. It is the entrance to Manila. Travelers from the northern provinces, while still on MacArthur Highway, can see its welcoming obelisk from far off and will know that their trip is almost over. The sculptures of Bonifacio and his *katipuneros* by National Artist Guillermo Tolentino rank with the best in the world.

It is a joy to see their figures and facial expressions caught in different moods. Just looking at them arouses feelings of patriotism in the viewer. It is a work of art Filipinos can really be proud of.

But it is now out of place at the present site. It is surrounded by a wet market, shopping malls, commercial buildings and the LRT terminal. The site is also the terminal for buses and jeepneys. And although tens of thousands of people and vehicles pass around it every day, few dare to cross the traffic-choked rotunda to go to the monument and look at the sculptures up close. What's more, the emissions of the vehicles are corroding the copper of the sculptures. Bonifacio and his *katipuneros* need to retreat to a less dangerous battlefield. They are losing the battle against pollution and urban sprawl there.

Art lovers have suggested transferring the monument to the Rizal Park in Manila where it will be at home opposite the Rizal monument. It can be located in the middle of the park between Roxas Boulevard and the Quirino Grandstand. It will be a grand sight from a distance, and people can walk up close and appreciate the individual sculptures. Well-lighted at night, the monument can be a beacon to guide travelers from anywhere in the city, even from the ships in the bay.

Since it will take time to plan and prepare for the monument's transfer, planning should be started now. Since Manila would be the beneficiary of its proposed transfer, perhaps Mayor Lito Atienza should take a break from constructing schoolhouses and parking buildings and be the lead official in making preparations for the transfer. After all, Bonifacio was the most outstanding constituent of Manila's Tondo district. What a way to change Atienza's image from the "Demolition Man" to the "Savior of the Bonifacio Monument."

* * *

Here is good news for all Filipino short story writers in English, veterans and newcomers alike. The NVM Gonzalez Short Story Awards will give two grand prizes starting this year: one for the best short story of the year, and another for the best first published short story by a new writer. The first category has a P50,000 prize; the second category, P25,000.

All short stories in English published within the period Oct. 1, 2000 to Oct. 15, 2001 are eligible. Deadline for the submission of entries is Oct. 30, 2001. All editors of university and college journals and magazines, as well as editors of national magazines, are also encouraged to submit their choices of entries for the contest. Regarding the second category, a notarized statement that it is the writer's first published short story must accompany the entry.

All entries must be submitted in five copies, including the original published form, to:

NVM Awards c/o aklat @ la-ru-an, 2/F FBR Arcade, 317 Katipunan Ave., Loyola Heights, Quezon City 1108. For inquiries, call Bang, 435-4573 (11 a.m. to 7 p.m.).

The awards ceremonies will be on Dec. 8, 2001.

The NVM Awards honors the late National Artist for Literature NVM Gonzalez's abiding love for the short story, and seeks to preserve and encourage excellence in this genre among Filipino writers. His evocative imagery and sympathetic portrayals of humble Filipinos altered the course of Filipino writing in English. The award for the first published short story seeks to encourage young people to try their hand at short story writing.

The first NVM Award went to Menchu Aquino Sarmiento last year for her short story, "Good Intentions 1011 SY '72-'73." Winning short stories will eventually be compiled in an anthology.

* * *

I was besieged with inquiries regarding yesterday's column about an exciting discovery: an enzyme that dissolves any organic waste into an odorless liquid in as short as 20 minutes. The result is a cheap but effective liquid fertilizer which can be sprayed or poured on plants or mixed with a binder like rice hulls, sawdust, coconut coir, shredded hay and leaves, soil and lahar to make the conventional form of fertilizer.

It may finally solve the garbage problem of Metro Manila, provide farmers and home gardeners with cheap fertilizer and at the same time give scavengers and other jobless people a means of livelihood.

For more information, call the inventor himself: Odilon T. Sta. Teresa, president of Waste Wise International at Tel. No. 551-9261 to 63.

* * *

KAPIHAN NOTES: The topic of next Monday's Kapihan sa Manila will be the current controversy over money laundering, the alleged multimillion-dollar deposits of Sen. Panfilo Lacson, et al., and his friend Kim Wong. Panelists are former Manila Mayor and Interior Secretary Alfredo Lim who claims he knows Wong, and Col. Victor Corpus himself—if Malacañang and the AFP will allow him. Senator Lacson has agreed to be a panelist on Aug. 27, 2001.

Waray

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

I REMEMBER reading some years ago a piece written by Eduardo Makabenta, a poet from Carigara, Leyte, about the word "waray." Makabenta, who writes with homespun wisdom, not unlike Robert Frost, wondered amusedly why a group of people from Leyte should be called Waray. Indeed, why the language of Samar and northern Leyte should be called Waray. When "waray" means "nothing." Or in Tagalog, "wala." The equivalent would be a group of Tagalogs calling themselves and their language "Wala."

I do not now recall how Makabenta's piece goes exactly, but I do recall that it brought out the humorous aspects of the word waray. Specifically, it brought out the irony of how things that are nothing can amount to something, and how things that are something can amount to nothing.

I remembered this when I saw the Pistahan, or Philippine Arts Festival, at the Yerba Buena Arts Center in downtown San Francisco last weekend. The festival, a two-day affair that drew out the Filipino community in the bay area full force—thanks in no small way to the prodigious effort of Luz de Leon, the organizer and artistic director of the event—was the eighth of its kind and by far the most ambitious. And if the remarks of the Filipinos in attendance themselves are anything to go by, by far also the most successful.

The festival featured songs and dances at the Yerba Buena compound throughout the day for two days. On Sunday morning, the Filipino community mounted a fairly lavish parade that wound through the streets of San Francisco and ended at Yerba Buena. For two days too, a bus took interested spectators to an art museum where a sampling of Filipino paintings was being exhibited.

Looking at the song-and-dance and parade and paintings, and indeed at the food and crafts and the people there, I wondered how we might have looked from the outside. What kind of image we projected to the world. And I got this thought that what seemed normal, integrated or completely congruous to us must seem confusing, fragmented and incongruous to strangers. The Filipino is not so easy to pin down, outside looking in. Either we are everything that adds up to nothing. Or we are nothing that adds up to everything.

The parade was a testament to that everything-ness and nothing-ness. The floats were a mixture of East and West, tradition and modernity, ethnicity and urbanization. It featured, among others, Miss America, who is a Filipino from Hawaii (and who's making waves for being quite possibly the brightest beauty queen in America); a group of Muslims from the South; men and women clad in *ternos* and butterfly gowns; a group of men demonstrating *kali* (or *arnis*, or *iskrima*, as it is also called, a form of martial arts that originated from the Philippines); a group of kids dancing hip-hop; several *manongs* and *manangs*, some in suits and modern dress, others in traditional Philippine garb, representing the elderly; a group of gays dressed in denims and shirts; various leaders of organizations in the United States.

What to make of this? It was not quite Asian, not quite Pacific islander, not quite American, not quite tribal, not quite modern, not quite East and not quite West. It was a strange but not unprepossessing amalgam of so many things. It was obviously something that had a life of its own, that had invisible—subtle or tenuous, I don't know—threads keeping it together. Something that was more intuited than intellectualized, something that was more felt than known.

It was the same thing with the music. Some of the Fil-Am bands you could not distinguish from any of the bands on MTV. But I found one group very interesting, a group that gave a glimpse of the kind of fusion, or coming together, the Filipino represents. Their name was Bobby Banduria, named after the leader of the group who played electric banduria. He was dressed in all black, punk style, and wore sunglasses. His keyboard player wore a barong Tagalog, his violinist wore a polo barong and a skirt, and his bass player and drummer wore street clothes.

They played traditional Philippine tunes in rock-jazz mode, an eclecticism that worked wonders. Not a wrong note at all there. I liked the playful mood alongside the tremendous proficiency of the playing, the lightness of tone alongside the seriousness of the purpose, the tightness of the sound and image alongside the seeming incongruity of their elements. Someone would tell me later that Bobby Banduria, a.k.a Kevin Camia, was a member of a group that did stand-up comedies. Now that is Pinoy.

I remember from long ago the Institute of Philippine Culture's refutation of the idea that you scratch the Filipino's foreign, particularly Western, encrustations and you'll find the intrinsic Filipino underneath. In fact, the Filipino, they said, is like an onion. You keep peeling off the layers, and you'll find nothing at the core. Filipinos in America like to think of that identity in terms of the *halo-halo*. That sweet, icy, flavorful concoction, they say, isn't just a nice dessert, or *merienda* item, it is a nice image for the Pinoy. That is one way of looking at it, to describe the amalgam, the hodgepodge, the fusion that we are.

There is another way of looking at it. Which is that our identity is—nothing. We are a people with a monumental talent for adjusting, for blending, for disappearing into the landscape. Maybe that is the product of our long colonial past, which has compelled us to survive by learning the ways of others. But we are also capable of improvising, of transforming, or reworking things for our ends. We did that with the jeepney, turning the lowly jeep into folk art, and the barong Tagalog, turning a colonial instrument of oppression into a symbol of national pride. The reemergence is not always as apparent as the disappearance, but it's there. In all its colorful, strange and sometimes boisterous beauty.

We are nothing. But that nothing is not the emptiness of a void or vacuum, it is the emptiness of a door or window. A door or window is also nothing, an empty space, but what a wonderful—and monumentally useful—nothingness it is. Think of a house without doors and windows, think of how oppressive it can be. And think of the Filipino.

I don't know how best to describe it other than that we are probably the Warays of the world.

* * *

Comments are welcome at dequiros@vasia.com

The press and the Left

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila

THE LIFTING by the Supreme Court of the last bar to the entry of the party of the Left, Bayan Muna, into the parliamentary arena came a few days after Antonio Zumel, a senior leader of the National Democratic Front, died in exile in Utrecht.

Zumel passed away just as his colleague in the central committee of the NDF, Satur Ocampo, entered Congress from which people with socialist ideas had been barred since the restoration of the legislature in 1946. If Tony had not gone ahead, he might have drunk beer—with his surviving friends in the National Press Club—to mark the historic breakthrough of Satur and Crispin Beltran into once forbidden grounds.

Zumel's death and Bayan Muna's entry into mainstream politics mark the coming into full circle of the socialist movement's political participation in this country. It is not a coincidence that Zumel and Ocampo not only were Marxists who translated their beliefs into revolutionary action but also were journalists—and very good ones, too.

In the more than 50 years of elitist democratic politics in this country, there have been only three arenas open to the expression of the point of view of equitable social distribution—journalism, the union movement and armed rebellion. Zumel and Ocampo took the first path—Zumel as a reporter and later news editor in the Philippine Herald, and Ocampo as a business journalist in the old Manila Times, which "publicist" Dante Ang is recasting as a mouthpiece of the Macapagal administration.

Both were very competent and very honest and full of integrity—in their vocation as well as in their doctrinal beliefs. Zumel came under the tutelage of the Left-wing guru, Jose Lansang. Despite their Marxist perspectives, Zumel and Ocampo kept their ideological biases away from their reporting within the liberal democratic framework. With the closure of the free press upon the declaration of martial law in 1972, both went underground to pursue social revolution.

If the press was the object of the communist witch-hunt by the ultra-Right during the Cold War, the reason was that it was one of the few institutions that nurtured the expression of the ideas of social equity.

In the anti-communist pogrom of the 1950s, carried out zealously by the Military Intelligence Service, the unions and the papers suspected of leftism were raided and their members arrested and tortured. I remember the likes of Mac Vicencio, a damn good police reporter of the Manila Times and later president of the NPC, and Teddy Benigno, a sports writer, among others, being hauled to the MIS' torture chambers.

As natural social reformers, many journalists found the press the venue for reformism and social renovation. The door of politics and the conservative political parties was slammed on the faces of these "dangerous" social heretics.

Zumel and Ocampo were less dialectical than the hard-line ideological Marxist-Leninists like Jose Ma. Sison. While Sison could probably recall from memory all the works of Marx and Lenin, Zumel and Ocampo had more flexibility. They knew their Marx but were not manacled by rigid dialectical materialism that their die-hard orthodox comrades adhered to. In the schism inside the Communist Party of the Philippines, Zumel and Ocampo were identified with the more pragmatic and flexible point of view. Their being journalists endowed them with the perception of what is possible in the Filipino political culture where change takes a cosmetic form most of the time.

Contemporaries of Zumel took him as a journalist more than as a man of the Left, which inclination he did show during the period of social unrest leading to martial law. Free time after deadlines was badinage over shop talk among journalists—not about doctrines.

The unrest polarized politics, with the polarization extending up to the NPC, then the symbol of press freedom more than the watering hole of journalists in the NPC bar. Zumel, already a newspaper union leader, won the presidency in 1970, a candidate of the nationalist and leftist movement. Nationalism and leftism were the vehicles through which disadvantaged sectors expressed their social grievances and their views of a just society.

As the center of dissent and expression of social grievances, the NPC aligned with the Civil Liberties Union and the political opposition to the Marcos regime. It was a center of organization of political dissent. When Zumel's term came to an end, the nationalists and the Left looked for a candidate for the NPC presidency with sympathetic political views. Renato Constantino and Zumel talked to me to run for president. We won a majority in the board in 1971 on the platform of keeping the NPC a center of political dissent as signs of an impending martial rule loomed. As unrest intensified, the NPC became a sanctuary of the student movement culminating in the First Quarter Storm.

When I returned to Manila in late 1985 after leaving in 1975, I had some secret meetings with Zumel, Ocampo and Bobbie Malay in safe houses. We didn't talk much about ideological issues. We talked about the state of rebellion and the imminent demise of the Marcos regime—stuff that appeals and is useful to journalists but less useful to ideologues.

When Zumel came home for the last time after years of exile, he found a benign political climate more open—but really not much—to political participation by the political pariahs of the past. He found a climate more hospitable to negotiations. But what seems more important than the negotiations milieu is that the Left has established a toehold in a policy organ of the state—Congress. Even so, when the arena was opened to the representatives of the marginalized social sectors, it took long to seat the Bayan Muna party-list representatives.

But in the Philippines, change comes slowly. Zumel realized the conservative inertia had blocked revolutionary change. What we have seen over the past 14 years was the substitution of revolution with a counterfeit called "people power."

Victory and justice, at last

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

FROM CEBU comes a rare piece of good news in the often-frustrating work of bringing sex offenders to justice.

Renulfo Ortiz, a councilman of Barangay Sto. Niño in Cebu City, was recently sentenced to reclusion perpetua (20-40 years imprisonment) after RTC Judge Olegario Sarmiento Jr. found him guilty of raping his housemaid, then 16 years old. She later bore a child, and Ortiz was ordered to acknowledge paternity and pay for moral damages as well as child support.

I'm writing about this particular case because the barangay official was brought to justice with the assistance of two chapters of Pilipina, in Butuan and Cebu, and only after years of agonized waiting and vigilance by the families of his victims. Yes, victims.

Ortiz was actually facing two rape cases, both involving teenage househelp. A murder charge was also filed against him for the killing, allegedly by a hired killer contracted by him, of the father of the other victim. It was in fact the father of "Victim B" who first brought Ortiz to the attention of Pilipina.

"Victim A" and "Victim B," it turns out, are cousins. A story in the SunStar Cebu mentions that the court found "glittering" (could the judge have meant "glaring"?) similarities between the two rape complaints against the barangay councilman. The two girls were 15 and 16 years old at the time of the rapes (in 1996), working in the Ortiz home as housemaids, and had been instructed to remain inside a car and watch it before being driven to the Reclamation area where they were raped. "Victim B's" father was killed after he went to Cebu to accompany his daughter in filing a case of rape against Ortiz. There were talks that the murderer was a hired killer who hunted down "Victim B's" father to intimidate the family into withdrawing the rape cases against Ortiz.

* * *

I HAD known about the rape cases for some time, but the Pilipina officers in Cebu and Butuan wanted to keep a low profile because of Ortiz's alleged ties to the criminal underground. Aside from being a barangay councilman, Ortiz has a buy-and-sell business and runs a taxi service and lending firm, aside from other enterprises.

One of the witnesses for the defense was Maureen Cabanes, a relative of the two complainants who in fact recruited the two young women to work for Ortiz. Cabanes is reportedly Ortiz's girlfriend, having three children all surnamed Ortiz.

In her testimony, Cabanes said it was impossible for Ortiz to have raped "Victim A" because she and the girl were in Mindanao at the time the rape was supposed to have taken place. Judge Sarmiento, however, said Cabanes was not credible, especially when compared to her "shy and simply dressed" younger relative.

When the judgment was handed down, "Victim A" burst into tears, as did her family and members of Lihok-Pilipina, who had been assisting her for the past three years and who were at the court house to lend her moral support.

The battle is not yet over, though. Ortiz angrily declared his innocence in court while his lawyer said they would file an appeal before the Supreme Court.

* * *

SEXUAL harassment was the main fare at a symposium last Wednesday at the University of Perpetual Help Rizal in Las Piñas. I was the guest speaker at the affair, sponsored by the Community Outreach Program in cooperation with the Supreme Student Council, the College Student Council and Sectoral Councils, and in partnership with the Kalakasan Foundation.

The students, from both high school and college levels, proved to be a lively lot, and had no compunctions debating questions of fairness and interpretations of what exactly constitutes sexually harassing behavior.

It was good to know that "Perpetual" already has in place its own sexual harassment policy and committee on decorum and investigation, and that in fact two cases filed by students against instructors had been resolved in favor of the complainants. One professor resigned, while the other "simply disappeared," says Leticia dela Paz, college guidance and admissions director. On the other hand, as pointed out by Ruel Lavapie, UPHR prefect of discipline, in one case where two female students lodged a complaint of sexual harassment against a male instructor, the two young women were suspended after an investigation found the charge baseless.

I would like to thank Dr. Grace de Leon, UPHR chancellor, for her presence, and Mary Jane B. Inocencio, UPHR COP director; Gloria Stenzo Ramos, executive director of Kalakasan, and the Kalakasan staff for coordinating the event.

Ms Dela Paz reminded me that she had been present at the first "Speak-Out Against Sexual Harassment" in UP Diliman, sponsored by Pilipina, at a time when this was not yet a recognized issue and a law against sexual harassment was still far on the horizon. How times have changed, indeed!

* * *

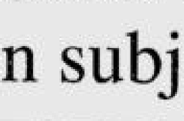
GUESTING on "XYZone" tomorrow (12:30-1:30 p.m. on dzAR "Angel Radyo" 1026 AM) is Civil Service Commission Chair Karina Constantino-David. Up for discussion are the new guidelines on sexual harassment that the CSC has promulgated and were recently launched by no less than President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo in Malacañang.

As you may know, the new guidelines, which cover all government employees except presidential appointees, go beyond the coverage of the Anti-Sexual Harassment Law. Under the law, for instance, one could sexually harass only one's subordinates or students. Under the new CSC guidelines, peer sexual harassment, or sexual harassment of someone of equal rank (or even your superior) is now subject to administrative sanctions. The guidelines also penalize sexual harassment through the new informational technologies, such as smutty messages sent by e-mail, text or in chat rooms.

If you have any questions about the CSC guidelines or about sexual harassment in general, Karina and I would be glad to take your phoned-in questions. Just call 899-1026 for your questions, comments, anecdotes or suggestions.

Choosing column subjects

LOOKING BACK



Ambeth R. Ocampo

THE FIVE-VOLUME compilation of documents titled, "The Philippine Insurrection Against the United States" compiled by John R.M. Taylor has been a major source of information for this column and my lectures. These thick volumes contain a wide range of documents providing the historian or even the interested general reader a handy reference for the Philippine Revolution and the Filipino-American War. To prove how useful the collection is, the late William Henry Scott closed his eyes, plucked a volume from his shelves, let the book stand on its spine and was able to write a lengthy paper for an academic conference on a topic that appeared randomly from its pages. Of course, this is not a very scientific or scholarly way to beat a newspaper deadline, but necessity truly is the mother of invention. I tried Scotty's method on the third volume and found some intriguing documents.

First was a letter from Jose Ignacio Paua from Tonsuya dated July 6, 1898 dealing with cash contributions to the Aguinaldo government collected from Chinese merchants in Tambobong, Meycauayan and Polo. Doesn't this sound strangely contemporary? Were these contributions made out of patriotism or were the Chinese forced to cough up the cash? Today, Paua is revered as one of the heroes of the Filipino-American War. Looking at Paua in bronze on the old road in Silang leading to Tagaytay reminded me of Artemio Ricarte who said that during the arrest of Andres Bonifacio, this same Jose Ignacio Paua stabbed the Supremo in the neck. History is really a point of view, one source can make Paua into a hero, another can paint him as the villain. How a historian chooses one from the other is the great challenge.

Paua's letter to Aguinaldo is intriguing because of the following text:

"With regard to what you said to the effect that I was retaining two percent [of the contributions] for myself, you should not suspect me in that way, for you are already well aware of my desire to serve the Dictatorial Government. Also, regarding the promotion, I do not expect it, because I am not worthy. It would be a great satisfaction to me to aid you with all my strength; and the only thing that I see to object to is that the Commanders and Generals in this province are getting pretty abusive toward our brethren [the Chinese?] and allow themselves to be bribed by the Tagalog merchants so as to allow them to enter Manila with the goods, which is of great assistance to our enemies."

I presume Paua is here complaining about forced contributions from the Chinese which were not collected. Isn't this a concern even in our days? Come to think of it, Chinese contributions have been around all the way down to the 16th century. Not much has changed in our dealings with the Chinese, *intsik* and *Tsinoys* in centuries except the method of collection which today can take the form of ransom for kidnapped Chinese. Then I allowed Volume 3 of Taylor to stand on its spine two more times to find documents on food. A draft order to the military governor of Cavite dated July 22, 1898 dealt with hoarders:

"...In view of the large number of those who are storing and monopolizing food and other most necessary articles, under the pretense of desiring to sell them to the Americans, but whose real intention is to ship them secretly to Manila where they receive higher prices for their merchandise, without regard for the injury they are doing to the cause of our independence..."

Manila was then under a blockade. Dewey and the American fleet had control of the sea while Aguinaldo's forces had surrounded Intramuros, cut off its food and water supply, as well as communications. It was only a matter of time before the Spaniards, holed within the medieval city, would surrender yet contraband food managed to slip through. Money has a way of getting around these things. Of course, the Spaniards surrendered the city to the Americans, not to Aguinaldo, that is another story.

Finally, the last document was how officers were to feed their men by requesting civilians for food, paying for this, or in severe cases confiscating palay! The important part of the Aguinaldo decree dated June 8, 1898 reads:

"In case of a failure to secure food for the soldiers, I expect that the officers will not take their meals until the soldiers' food has been obtained. I hereby authorize any commanding officer...to confiscate the palay of a palay-holder who refuses to give the same for the soldiers; provided that a reasonable quantity of palay be left to the said palay-holder for his maintenance and his family...confiscated palay cannot be used except for the maintenance of the troops..."

Even during the revolution, Aguinaldo tried time and again, to stem abuses of his men. Whether his orders were followed is another matter. Using Taylor for today's column reminds me of people who use the same method on their Bible every morning to get God's will for the day. If only Taylor came with a good analytical index, then I wouldn't have to source material for today's column the way I did.

* * *

Comments are welcome at ambeth@admu.edu.ph

A boat for Bill Solheim

COMMENTARY

Sylvia L. Mayuga

THE NAME Wilhelm G. Solheim II may not ring a bell among Filipino talk show hosts and mainstream audiences but it's a weighty one among scholars on the trail of what Southeast Asia must have been like before colonialism.

Vis-à-vis our region's mass poverty amid present geopolitical and economic realities, the perspective of this eminent American prehistorian, anthropologist and archaeologist is like a lifeline thrown from the deep past, making it possible to imagine a much more expansive future based on ancient ties.

"Nusantao" (Nusa for island; tao for man) is the name Dr. Solheim coined in the '70s for his concept of a Southeast Asian cradle of civilization around 5,000 B.C. or earlier. He believes it extended from Island Southeast Asia in a maritime trading and communication network that, through millennia, linked Taiwan, South China, Japan and Korea, Vietnam, Thailand, Malaysia, Burma, Sri Lanka, India and Madagascar with the vast Pacific.

"I would hypothesize," writes Dr. Solheim, "that the most direct descendants of (the Nusantao) in Southeast Asia would be the Sea Gypsies of Malaysia, the Samal and similar groups of southern Mindanao and adjacent Malaysia and Indonesia and the relatively poorly known boat people of Hong Kong and other port cities of Vietnam and South China. These people in the recent past would have borne relatively little cultural resemblance to their Nusantao ancestors. During the last few hundred years their status has deteriorated, bringing them to the bottom of the local pecking order instead of being, as they were around 2,000 years ago, economically prosperous and the masters of their homes and livelihood, the southern and eastern seas..."

To recount in this space how Dr. Solheim arrived at his grand hypothesis would be like trying to pour a barrel of water into a thimble. Suffice it to say that this scholarly detective uses a formidable range of sources written and unwritten, depth and surface, not the least of which has been ancient pottery excavated in Asia and the Pacific. This story still unfolding has taken him to all directions of Nusantao territory to dig, write, lecture, interview, observe and infect local and global audiences with delight at extant traces of that ancient sea-borne civilization, better known as Austronesian, to which Filipinos trace their own lineage.

It was in fact in the Philippines that Bill Solheim's lifelong interest in Southeast Asian maritime culture was sparked. In the late '40s, with a master's degree in anthropology from Berkeley, he arrived in UP Diliman to learn Philippine archaeology from H.Otley Beyer. As a research associate of the UP Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology in the '50s, Solheim dug the pottery in Kalanay, Masbate that, linked to pottery in Sa Huynh, Vietnam, became a byword in the world of archaeology.

After earning his Ph.D. in Anthropology from the University of Arizona, Dr. Solheim made Hawaii his home base for intellectual and physical voyaging through Nusantao pre- and protohistory, today shared with several universities and many scholarly societies in the Asia Pacific, Europe and America. But while he could leap over millennia in the seven-league boots of scholarship, 40 years passed (26 of them shared with his Filipina wife, the late Ludy Montenegro of Bais) since he took root in Hawaii. In 1990, Solheim retired as professor emeritus of the University of Hawaii's Department of Anthropology.

After lecture tours in Southeast Asia, Guam, China, India, the United States and Europe, then 73-year-old Solheim returned to UP in 1997, nearly 50 years after he was an archaeology student there. Now a visiting professor, he joined its new Archaeological Studies Program, donated his personal library and several collected artifacts, ready to seed a new generation of Filipino archaeologists. He had not only stepped into the shoes of H.Otley Beyer, the "father of Philippine archaeology." He had also renewed what he calls his "half-Filipino heritage" by marrying another Filipina, Nene Santarin of Manila.

But with much remaining to discover and confirm about the Philippines as a key point in Asia-Pacific history, a problem has developed of late. There seems to be a hesitation at UP about renewing Dr. Solheim's contract which, along with his visa and residency in Bahay Kalinaw, terminates by the end of September. It seems certain "nationalists" are questioning the exception that has been made for him on the mandatory retirement age of 65 that, he has been given to understand, only the President of the Philippines can extend.

"Philippine archaeology has so far been only descriptive—how deep, how old, how many," says Dr. Jesus Peralta, former chief of the National Museum's anthropology division. "We really need Bill to train new students in theory so they can go into interpretation." Without interpretation, there can be no understanding. Without understanding, there can be no sense of wonder in our history, pride in our roots, or fertile wisdom for our future.

On this second paper boat to the Pasig is a new message: let's not lose Bill Solheim, Madame President.

Not coming to terms

NEWS ANALYSIS

Francoise Kadri

TOKYO—As Japan marks the 56th anniversary Wednesday of its surrender in World War II, the controversy aroused by Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi's visit to Yasukuni Shrine demonstrates the country has still not come to terms with its responsibility for the war, experts say.

Just before his visit Monday to the Tokyo shrine which is seen by many in Asia as a symbol of Japanese nationalism, Koizumi alluded vaguely to Japan's record of wartime atrocities.

"During the war, Japan caused tremendous suffering to many people of the world, including its own people."

But for many historians, such statements do not go far enough and continue to propagate the view that the Japanese people were victims all along, forced to obey the orders of a military high command gone mad.

"In many of the anti-war narratives that were asserted to represent the common war experience, issues of individual and collective responsibility for Japanese aggression were sidestepped," says US academic James J. Orr in his newly published book, 'The Victim as Hero: Ideologies of Peace and National Identity in Postwar Japan' (University of Hawaii Press).

"The role of victimizer was assigned to the military, to the militarist state or the vaguely defined entity called simply 'the system'."

For Haruki Wada, a television commentator and former professor of history at the prestigious University of Tokyo, the Yasukuni issue and the outcry at Tokyo's approval in April of revisionist history textbooks are rooted in the same problem: Japan has not confronted its past.

"All the blame was placed on the military. The Emperor (Hirohito) had responsibility of course, but did not face up to it. It is a big mistake, the biggest in postwar Japan," Wada said.

"He (Hirohito) kept his position and all the bureaucrats remained and people thought they were not responsible. So the Japanese people hated war and the military but they never admitted their own responsibility."

Yoichi Funabashi, a foreign affairs columnist for the liberal Asahi Shimbun daily, went even further.

"The Occupation, the post-war period, the Showa Era (Hirohito's reign 1926-1989), the Cold War and the 20th century have all ended without Japan clarifying its responsibility for its defeat, for having started the war (in Asia) and its responsibility during the war itself," he wrote last week.

Japan must recover its "ability to mourn" the victims of the war and overcome their loss, starting by "squarely facing the hard facts and discerning its context and background," rather than "just drift along," Funabashi believes.

Wada lamented the fact that in contrast to Germany where Hitler committed suicide and a new state grew out of the ruins of war, modern Japan has had no break with its past. **AFP**

LETTERS

The Filipino smile

IF there is any trait that aptly describes our character and personality as a people, it is our unique, perpetual and endearing smile.

Nothing can be more inviting, charming and alluring than our natural and God-given smile.

Our campaign to lure in more tourists should be as natural as nature's smiling child in the Pacific.

We don't really even have to try hard as smiling comes naturally to us, come rain or come shine. Smile Philippines and everybody else smiles with us.—**FRANCIS YUSECO, 340 Apo St., Ayala Alabang Village, Muntinlupa City**

The ethical Saguisag

MANY have criticized former Sen. Rene A.V. Saguisag for his highly misunderstood decisions. Only a few, however, knew that he declined an appointment to the Supreme Court signed by President Aquino because he was then still part of her official family. Out of *delicadeza,* he said.

Had he accepted the appointment, he would have been the Chief Justice now, presiding over the impeachment trial and not defending former President Estrada. How he could have changed Philippine history.

But I am digressing.

Now comes the report that Palace Chief of Staff Renato Corona has been appointed to the Supreme Court or the Judicial and Bar Council. Whichever it is, Corona should decline the appointment out of *delicadeza.*

We can fault Saguisag for so many things, mainly his defense of unpopular causes and personalities. But his adherence to ethical practices is unquestioned.—**ARCHIMEDES S. MARQUEZ 172-FM dela Fuente, Manila 1008**

Safer drugs must also be assured

I WRITE on the very compelling issue of good manufacturing practices of drug companies, strict government regulation and public safety.

I am for generic drugs as long as they adhere to the standards of safety, efficacy and quality. It must be pointed out that there are many reputable generic companies in the Philippines which adhere to government regulations. However, there are those that have violated government regulations on product safety. People's lives and well-being depend on medicines. In the interest of public safety, local manufacturers should adhere to good manufacturing practices and the government should come down hard on known drug manufactures, importers and distributors who violate standards.

The IBON Features special report (a three-part series) published in May this year listed very important data that need to be addressed by the government in the interest of patients and the public. Among these are the following:

- The Department of Health under then Secretary Alberto Romualdez started receiving reports of substandard or violative drugs in 1999. Random samples were collected from drug outlets and government hospitals and sent for testing at the laboratory of the Bureau of Food and Drugs (BFAD) in Manila. It tested 49 different samples for quality and safety. From this 1999 report of 49 sampled drugs from specific batches, 29 or around 60 percent failed. Of these, four drugs were found to have foreign matter, 20 failed their chemical testing, and 5 went against their registered label claims, among many other violations.
- From June to August 2000, more than 460 drug samples dispensed by the DOH nationwide and sold on the market were found by the BFAD to be violative. The list ranged from familiar analgesic paracetamol and antibiotics amoxicillin and cotrimoxazole, to so-called "life-and-death" injectables such as diazepam and promethazine HCI (an anti-allergic drug that is also used for sedating patients).
- Based on that evidence from January to August, then BFAD Deputy Director Hartigan-Go recommended the removal of accreditation of some companies. Since the intensified study of violative drugs on the market last year, the BFAD has yet to fully prosecute and shut down erring manufacturers and importers.

As a practitioner, I only have the interest of the patient and the general public at heart. I do not agree with the testing procedure of the BFAD. If one sample fails, then the rest must be withdrawn from the market.

Safety first for the patient and the consumer, that is the foremost concern. When a drug is found to be "substandard," the batch it came from should be removed immediately from circulation. And if this happens three or more times, or if other products from the same drug company are found to be "substandard," that company should be closed down.

I believe that a "conclusive finding" or scientific proof is rarely available. If it is, it is usually at postmortem or after people have already died or have been injured. Rules and regulations that are intended to protect public health should be based on the precautionary principle—that is, whenever there is threat of harm, preventive measures should be undertaken even if there is no "conclusive finding" (scientific proof) that harm has actually occurred.—**DR. REYNALDO LESACA, chair, Health Alliance for Democracy 233 Mayon cor. N. Roxas Sts., Quezon City**

Unfounded fear of 'GMO acacias'

THIS is in reference to the article titled, "Tearing the land apart" by Ma. Kristina E. Cassion last July 29, 2001. I would like to comment on that article's alarmist stance regarding the use of "GMO" trees.

The alleged GMO *Acacia mangium* trees are not like the controversial GMO agricultural crops because their genes are not artificially modified but were done by nature through the process of selection breeding. Pest and disease-resistant trees are selected from thousands of trees in plantations or in natural stands and then progeny tested. If the result of the progeny test confirms that some of the selected trees (otherwise called "potential plus trees") are inherently pest and disease-resistant, then seeds from these trees are used for planting, or vegetative parts of these progeny-tested plus trees are clonally propagated through rooting of cuttings or by tissue culture. These genetically improved plantlets are then used for the establishment of commercial-industrial plantations.

Acacia mangium naturally hybridizes with *Acacia auriculiformis* resulting in natural hybrids which are fast-growing and pest and disease-resistant. These hybrids can be found in plantations or in natural forests. They can be developed also by establishing a hybridizing seed orchard, like Malaysia has already done.

Because of our need for improving our reforestation and timber production efforts, very soon the Philippines will also produce these hybrids. As new strains are developed, biodiversity is enriched. These hybrids are clonally propagated to capture their inherent genetic make-up and then used in the establishment of industrial plantations.

It is very likely that these progeny-tested plus trees and the naturally hybridized *Acacia mangium* trees will be used as sources of planting materials by the multinational companies in the development of industrial plantations in the Caraga Region.

In other words, the fear of these superior trees is unfounded. These genetically improved Mangium trees are not harmful to human beings or to the environment. Mangiums fix nitrogen from the air which are then accumulated in the roots, branches, twigs and leaves. Through litterfall and after harvesting the timber, these parts are left to decompose on the site and deposited in the soil, thus enriching it with essential and beneficial nutrients rather than depleting it. Unlike the agricultural crop GMOs, the "GMO" trees are not ingested by human beings, hence they do not in any way affect human beings.

They are in fact environment-friendly because they also serve as "efficient carbon sinks" that help mitigate global warming.

The use of pest and disease-resistant strains in industrial plantations is a must because of the high-gestation period of tree production and the very high investment cost in the establishment and management of plantations.—**NEPTALE Q. ZABALA, Ph.D., former FAO international expert on tree propagation and forest tree improvement and former UP Los Baños professor in silviculture, 11 D. Lantican St., Jubileeville, Masaya, Bay, Laguna 4033**

Functional and clean rest rooms

I DON'T usually write letters to newspapers, but I feel I should share a pleasant experience which I hope would serve as an example to all gasoline stations in the country.

I was cruising on Fairview Avenue in Quezon City on a very hot afternoon last week and I chanced to pass by a Total gas service station. I went to the gas station, parked my car and entered its convenience store. The employees there were very friendly and eager to be of service.

After buying an ice cream, I went to the rest room and was impressed with what I saw. While the rest rooms in most of our commercial establishments seem to be the least and the last concern of their owners, the Total gas station's rest room was very clean.

Everything inside the rest room worked perfectly and it didn't stink like the facilities in other stations and even at first-class restaurants. I found out from a gas station attendant that they check on the condition and cleanliness of the rest rooms on rotation basis every half-hour or so.

Such convenience is rare and I would like to laud the owners of this gas station and other similarly concerned managements of commercial establishments.

Our lawmakers should pass a law mandating this kind of good service and convenient rest room facilities.—**GABRIEL S. GARCIA Consul Street, Fairview Quezon City**

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The WORLD

LUVERNE B. GUECO, EDITOR

AN ISRAELI tank guards the road from Jerusalem to Hebron near the settlement of Gilo, south of Jerusalem Aug. 15. Israel officials said Israeli troops might occupy the autonomous town of Beit Jala if Palestinians fired on a nearby Jewish settlement. REUTERS

Israel-Palestinian strife seen raging on until 2006

JERUSALEM—Israel's violent conflict with the Palestinians could last until 2006 and deteriorate into a regional war, according to a forecast being prepared by the country's military high command quoted in the press yesterday.

Palestinian Authority chair Yasser Arafat could, at most, reach an agreement with Israel for a lull in the conflict, which started late last September and has cost more than 700 lives, the daily Haaretz reported.

"But even that is not likely since Arafat believes that time is on the Palestinians' side," Haaretz quoted the preliminary assessment as saying.

"Furthermore, his domestic position in the face of the (militant Palestinian group) Hamas and other radical forces is likely to worsen, up to complete loss of control on his part."

The Army's planning directorate, which is preparing the assessment, also believes that, despite the growing internal pressure on Arafat from radicals, "the Palestinian Authority will not collapse and Arafat will not lose control over it," Haaretz said.

However, it said his ability to make decisions would be weakened by the growing strength of the extremists, the paper said.

The Army's annual assessment said war could break out as a result of an escalation of violence with the Palestinians or because of a confrontation in the north with Syria and Lebanon's Shiite fundamentalist group, Hezbollah, the Haaretz daily said.

The paper reported that the assessment was being finalized by the Israeli Defense Force as part of its annual strategic assessment to develop a multiyear strategic plan.

It described the Israeli-Palestinian and the northern fronts as "stable but fragile," according to Haaretz. *AFP*

Stem cell breakthrough announced

SYDNEY—Australian scientists yesterday said they may have discovered a way to successfully treat brain, nerve and spinal injuries by harvesting adult neural stem cells.

Conditions such as Parkinson's and Alzheimer's could also be reversed after researchers at the prestigious Walter and Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research in Melbourne claimed an international breakthrough.

They isolated large volumes of neural stem cells capable of regenerating into new tissue, nerves and muscle, according to research published in the international journal Nature yesterday.

The discovery could also end the ethical controversy surrounding stem-cell research on cloned human embryos, which are destroyed when the cells are extracted.

Research team head Perry Bartlett said the work had proved the versatility of adult stem cells beyond a doubt.

"It's really taken us this last nine or 10 years to be able to find what the cell looks like, and having found it, we can now look at ways of being able to stimulate it into making new nerve cells with the possibility of replacing damaged or lost nerve cells in the adult brain," he said.

"It's important in the sense that there's been a debate about whether stem cells from adult tissues, whether that be brain or blood or elsewhere, do have the potential of embryonic stem cells to give rise to various tissues.

"I guess this is one of the very first unequivocal demonstrations that these cells are able to give rise to a larger number of cell types than was previously thought."

An internationally recognized expert on infant genetic disorders welcomed the breakthrough, but cast doubt on whether it would ease the controversy over the use of stem cells taken from cloned embryos.

Hugo Moser, head of neurology and pediatrics at John Hopkins University Hospital in the United States, said mature adult stem cells would prove less useful to researchers that ones taken from embryos.

"The experience has been, and it makes logical sense, that the adult cells have some capacity of turning themselves into something else, but they're not as good at it as embryonic stem cells," he said.

The Australian researchers said they were the first in the world to extract mouse neural stem cells pure enough for scientists to be able to experiment with their versatility. *AFP*

Europeans hold little esteem for Bush skills

WASHINGTON—A majority of Western Europeans disapprove of most of US President George W. Bush's foreign policy positions and have little confidence in the American leader's handling of world affairs, according to a multinational poll released on Wednesday.

Seventy percent of nearly 4,000 adults polled in Germany, France, Great Britain and Italy said Bush made his decisions based entirely on US interests and understood less about Europe than other American presidents.

Not only do most Europeans reject key elements of Bush's foreign policy, they have little confidence in the president, the survey found. Only about a third of British and Italian respondents said they had a fair amount of confidence in Bush's handling of world affairs. Germans gave Bush better marks, with 51 percent saying they had some confidence in his abilities.

The respondents came down firmly against Bush on the issues that stirred the most controversy during his recent travels to Europe—his rejection of the Kyoto protocol on global warming and his plan to build a missile defense system, even though allies worry it could spark a new arms race.

Bush's decision to abandon the Kyoto protocol drew the most intense opposition among Europeans. Just one in 10 people in Britain, France and Germany and 12 percent in Italy backed Bush on that issue, according to the poll, conducted by the Washington-based Pew Research Center in conjunction the Council on Foreign Relations, a Washington think-tank, and the International Herald Tribune.

The poll found that 83 percent of Germans disapproved of Bush's plan to develop a missile defense program if it meant US withdrawal from the Anti-Ballistic-Missile Treaty. The opposition was nearly as large in the other countries, according to the survey.

In a speech on Tuesday in Colorado, Bush defended his administration's foreign policy, which he said was governed by what was in America's interest.

"We're sending a clear message overseas that ours is a proud nation that will promote the peace. But we're not going to sign on to every single agreement that somebody thought might have been good," Bush said. "What's good for America is going to be paramount to my way of thinking." *Reuters*

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Greenhouse gases already killing people, say experts

WASHINGTON—As nations debate the future effect on the climate of burning fossil fuels, a study finds no question that air pollution from exhaust pipes and smoke stacks already is killing people worldwide.

"It is our best estimate that more people are being killed by air pollution from traffic than from traffic crashes," said Devra Lee Davis, first author of the study appearing Friday in the journal Science.

Davis, a professor at Carnegie Mellon University's Heinz School for Public Policy and Management in Pittsburgh, said ozone, particulates, carbon dioxide and other pollutants from the combustion of fossil fuels may affect the climate in coming decades.

But she said her team found that they already are public health hazards.

"There are more than a thousand studies from 20 countries all showing that you can predict a certain death rate based on the amount of pollution," Davis said.

She said the burning of gasoline and coal are causing people to die prematurely from asthma, heart disease and lung disorders.

"We hope that policy-makers will understand that energy decisions and technology decisions are fundamentally public health decisions," she said.

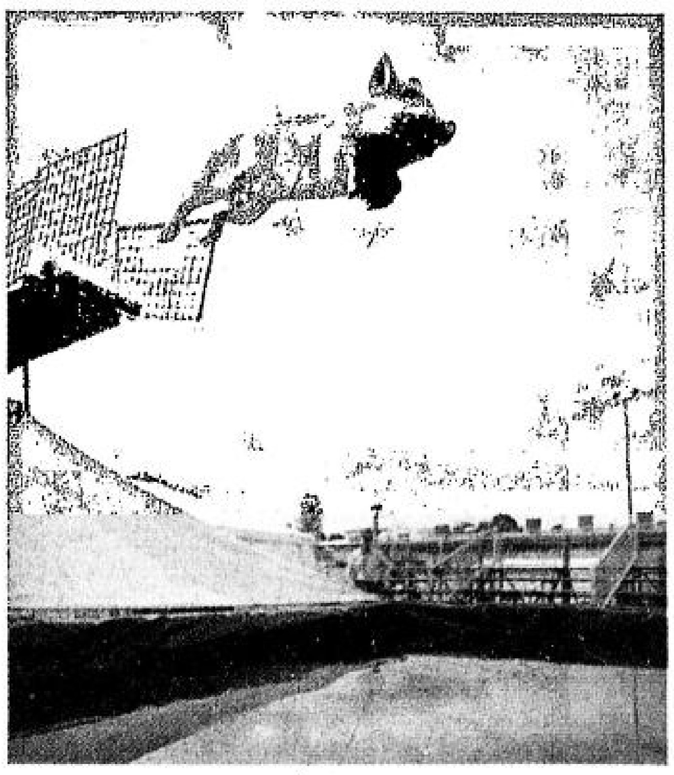
In the study, Davis and four co-authors researched the health effects of pollution from fossil-fuels on the rate of death in four cities—Sao Paulo, Brazil; Mexico City; Santiago, Chile; and New York—and found that adopting greenhouse gas abatement technologies now available would save 64,000 lives over the next 20 years in those cities. It would also prevent 65,000 cases of chronic bronchitis and save about 37 million person-days of restricted or lost work, the researchers estimated.

Davis said although the study concentrated on just four cities, the conclusions probably could be applied to cities worldwide. She said the data are consistent with a World Health Organization study that estimated that air pollution would cause about eight million deaths worldwide by 2020.

"Policies to mitigate (greenhouse gases) can yield substantive and immediate benefits to the three billion people currently residing in urban areas throughout the world," the study's authors claim.

"We're not talking about . . . futuristic technologies" to reduce pollution from burning fossil fuels, said Davis. "If the technologies we now have on the shelf were adopted quickly, they would have an immediate effect on public health."

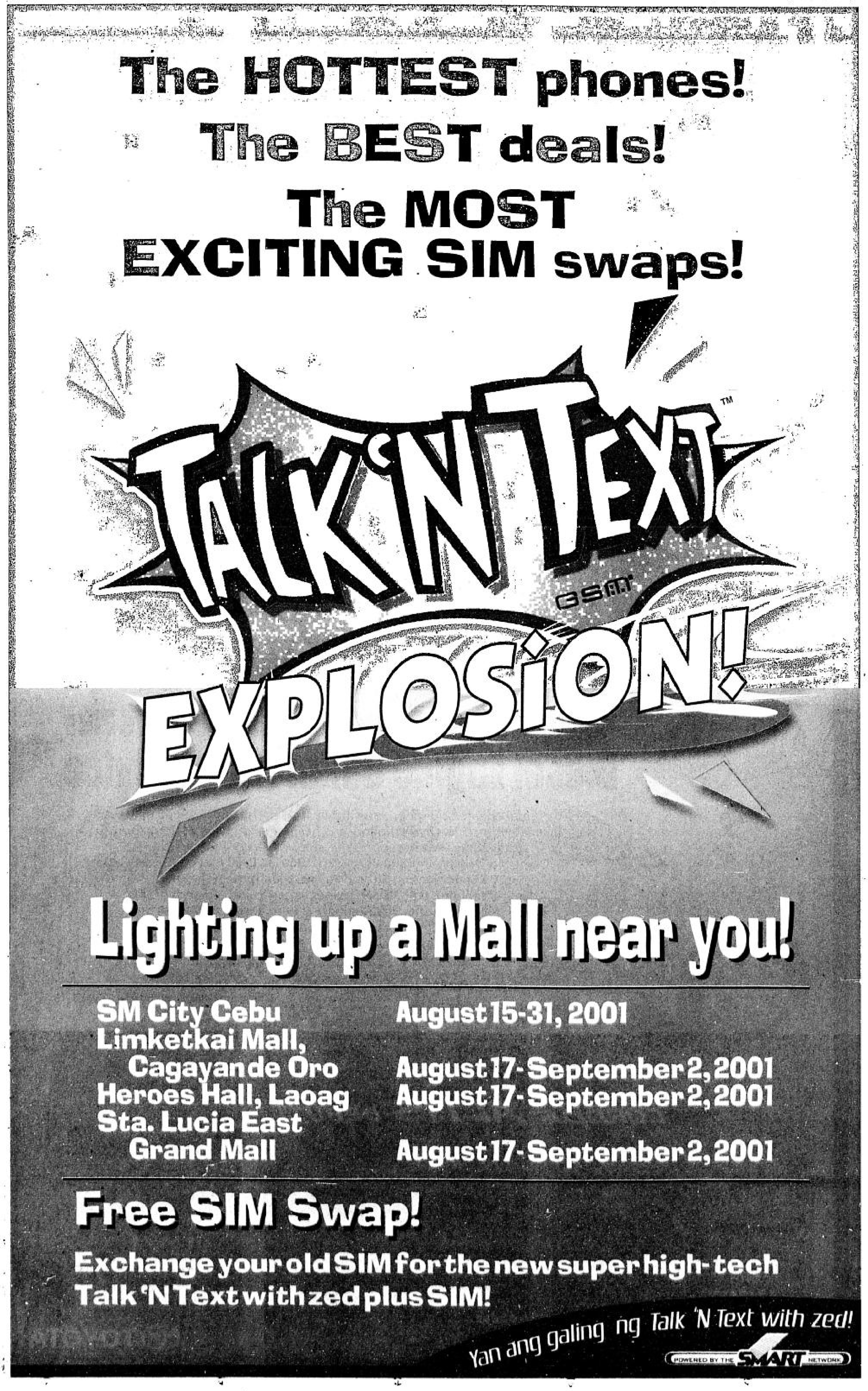
Dr. Jonathan Patz of the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health said the study by Davis and her co-authors draws "an important conclusion." *AP*



HOGGING THE LIMELIGHT

A pig, better known as "Miss Piggy," practices a dive into a swimming pool before a performance at the Royal Brisbane Show in Brisbane, Australia, Aug. 12. The diving pig is the star attraction at the annual show.

REUTERS



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Palace denies Charles-Camilla marriage report

LONDON—Buckingham Palace yesterday dismissed as speculation reports that Queen Elizabeth had finally agreed that Prince Charles and his longtime lover Camilla Parker Bowles could marry.

British newspapers published advanced extracts of an article in the Spectator magazine that suggested the queen had "grudgingly" accepted the couple should be free to wed after next year's Golden Jubilee celebrations of her monarchy.

"This is total speculation," a Buckingham Palace official said.

The Daily Telegraph quoted the Spectator as saying royal courtiers were in despair about the religious, legal and constitutional difficulties of a marriage between heir-to-the-throne Charles and Camilla.

But the Spectator said the courtiers were also aware "it is both cruel and absurd that the Prince and Ms Parker Bowles should be forced to contemplate old age deprived of the benefits and comfort of marriage."

It added: "The Spectator is reliably informed that the queen has come around, somewhat grudgingly to this view."

In June, Charles and Camilla sealed their longtime relationship with their first public kiss.

The kiss was heralded by royal watchers as a milestone in the relationship and underlining Charles's determination that Camilla be publicly accepted as his partner.

Charles has trodden a delicate public relations path over his relationship with divorcee Camilla since his marriage to the late Princess Diana ended in 1996 with admissions of adultery on both sides. Diana was killed in a Paris car crash a year later.

Charles and Camilla have gradually increased the frequency and profile of engagements they attend together.

Camilla met Queen Elizabeth for the first time last year at a birthday party for former King Constantine of Greece.

Marriage is a difficult issue for the couple because of the royal family's links with the Church of England, of which Charles is due one day to become supreme governor.

Last year newspapers reported that Charles was exploring the possibility of marrying in the Church of Scotland which, unlike the Church of England, is happy to marry divorcees in a religious ceremony. *Reuters*

WORLDBRIEFS

Nato troops in Macedonia

SKOPJE—A vanguard of British soldiers could arrive in Macedonia by the end of this week to prepare the ground for a 3,500-strong Nato force intended to help pull the country back from the brink of civil war. There was sporadic shooting in parts of the strife-torn republic overnight but a new ceasefire—a precondition of the Nato deployment—appeared to be broadly holding. Nato ambassadors meeting in Brussels on Wednesday approved the sending of the advance contingent of 400 troops as pioneers for a mission which will be the alliance's third in the Balkans and, it hopes, by far its briefest. *Reuters*

Bosnian Serb turns self in

THE HAGUE—A Bosnian Serb officer wanted for war crimes arrived here Wednesday after turning himself in at a Nato base, the latest in a string of high-ranking officers to come to answer for atrocities committed during the Bosnian war. Lt. Col. Dragan Jokic, 43, was wanted under a sealed indictment issued by the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY). Bosnian Serb Defense Minister Slobodan Bilic said the government was not involved in the transfer of the war crimes suspect, adding that it was a "personal decision" taken by Jokic. However, a government statement released later said that it was fully supportive "of this act of Jokic as a contribution to establishing a new atmosphere in relations . . . with the tribunal in The Hague." *AFP*

Media owners face arrest

SEOUL—South Korean prosecutors yesterday sought the arrest of prominent newspaper tycoons for tax evasion, amid accusations the move was a government bid to stifle criticism. The national prosecutor's office said documents had been sent seeking approval from the Seoul District Court for the arrest of four newspaper owners and an executive on charges of tax evasion and misappropriation. The criminal investigation has caused a storm of controversy in South Korea, whose media has traditionally enjoyed immunity from tax audits. *AFP*

Jakarta bans pedicabs

JAKARTA—Jakarta's governor vowed to press on with a campaign to rid the Indonesian capital of pedicabs despite the death of a security guard in a rampage by pedicab drivers, reports said yesterday. "The administration will not step down from driving (pedicabs) from the city as we are determined to rid the capital of them." Sutiyoso was quoted as saying by the Jakarta Post. The pedicabs, known locally as "becak," were phased out in 1988 on the grounds that they were inhumane for the drivers and caused traffic problems. But in 1998, at the height of the economic crisis, the governor authorized their return on humanitarian grounds. *AFP*

Megawati offers vision of 'new Indonesia'

JAKARTA—New President Megawati Sukarnoputri yesterday vowed to safeguard Indonesia's territorial integrity but apologized for past mistakes in handling separatist unrest in Aceh and Irian Jaya.

In her first State-of-the-Nation Address to parliament, Megawati promised to redress the situation through "fundamental corrections."

"Despite that, one thing remains clear. Everything must remain within the context of safeguarding the territorial integrity of the unitary state of the Republic of Indonesia," said Megawati, who was appointed by legislators on July 23 in place of sacked Abdurrahman Wahid.

Speaking on the eve of the 56th independence day, she reminded separatists that she would not only oppose any secessionist movement but that these "will also never obtain the support of the communities of other nations."

Separatists should instead return to the national fold and work together "to build a new Indonesia."

"I understand that there are remnants of past problems, which we should solve together . . . especially the problems of gross violations of human rights in areas of armed conflicts," she said.

In recent years successive governments have come under intense pressure at home and from abroad to prosecute cases of past gross human rights violations by soldiers, including in Aceh, Irian Jaya and East Timor.

Human rights

"Our stance in this matter is also clear. If there is really convincing evidence that gross violations of human rights have taken place outside of the war field, then these violations should incur actions in line with the prevailing law," she said.

Many observers have previously pointed to Megawati's perceived close ties with the powerful military, who supported her rise to power, to air fears that she would close her eyes to past human rights violations by soldiers.

"There should not be any impression that we are trying to hide those gross violations . . . no one is outside or above the law, even the president," Megawati said to the applause of the hall.

She said various past policies, which were seen as disadvantaging the regions, were at the root of discontent and separatism—including in Aceh and Irian Jaya at the two extremities of the archipelago.

"Therefore is only natural if we as a nation, extend our most earnest apology to our brothers who have suffered for so long because of past inappropriate national policies," she said.

Aceh

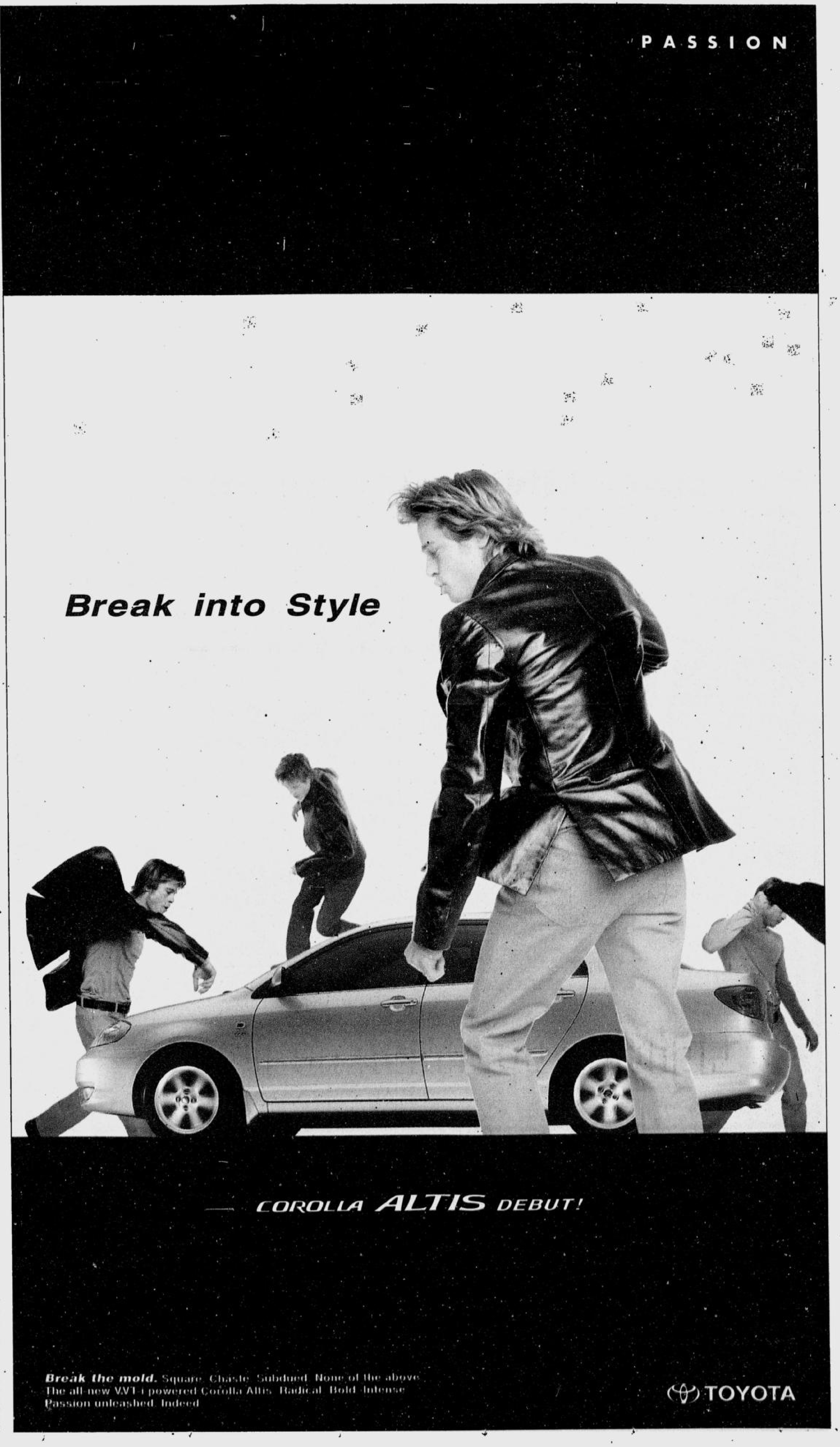
Jakarta was now working on "fundamental corrections" to redress the situation in Aceh and Irian Jaya, two resource-rich provinces where separatism has been on the rise.

The government would accord greater respect to the cultural identities and characteristic traits in those regions and give local governments more authority to manage their own affairs under a special autonomy format.

Megawati has signed a special autonomy law for staunchly Muslim Aceh that allows it to have its own judicial and education system, the partial application of Sharia laws and better returns from its rich natural resources.

A similar law is being prepared for Irian Jaya.

Megawati also vowed to continue reforms and democratization, including amending the vaguely-worded 1945 Constitution which many have blamed for recent political turmoil. *AFP*



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WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Western sections of Central and Northern Luzon will experience rains and gusty winds and the coastal waters will be moderate to rough. The rest of Western Luzon and Western Visayas will have monsoon rains. The rest of the country will be cloudy with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms.

SOURCE: PAGASA

Metro Manila	Rains	Hi 30° Lo 24°
Baguio	Rains	Hi 22° Lo 16°
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with rains	Hi 30° Lo 21°
Laoag	Rains	Hi 29° Lo 25°
Clark Zone	Rains	Hi 29° Lo 25°
Tagaytay	Rains	Hi 28° Lo 21°
Legazpi	Cloudy with rains	Hi 30° Lo 26°
Calapan	Rains	Hi 29° Lo 24°
Bacolod	Rains	Hi 28° Lo 24°
Roxas	Rains	Hi 29° Lo 24°
Cebu	Cloudy with rains	Hi 30° Lo 24°
Tacloban	Cloudy with rains	Hi 30° Lo 26°
Gen. Santos	Cloudy with rains	Hi 31° Lo 23°
Zamboanga	Cloudy with rains	Hi 31° Lo 24°
Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with rains	Hi 30° Lo 23°
Davao	Cloudy with rains	Hi 31° Lo 24°

Compiled by: Ray leyesa, PDI Research/08/17/01

PNP, AFP sign pact vs Reds

By Tonette Orejas
PDI Central Luzon Desk

FORT MAGSAYSAY, Nueva Ecija—Top officials of the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the Philippine National Police launched here on Saturday a joint counter-insurgency agenda aimed at crippling the Communist Party of the Philippines in Central Luzon, one of two regions from where the party derives its biggest funds.

The memorandum of agreement on the "suppression of insurgency and other serious threats to national security," copies of which were distributed to reporters, singled out the CPP, the New People's Army and the National Democratic Front as major targets.

"We would like to put on the record that the more military victories that we can accumulate against the NPA, the better. The other developmental aspects of our work will come across if we can project military victory," Lt. Gen. Roy Cimatu, AFP deputy chief of staff, told battalion commanders of the Army and provincial directors of the PNP during the MOA signing.

The MOA strengthened the partnership of the AFP and the PNP in internal security operations in which President Macapagal-Arroyo, through Executive Order 1101, stressed the supportive role of the police in the government's anti-insurgency program.

Director General Rex Piad, the PNP's directorial staff chief, witnessed the signing.

Aside from complementary efforts in operations and civil military operations, Cimatu said the "results of military victory will always come from good intelligence."

No details were provided on the current armed strength of the NPA, on the number of areas under the influence of the CPP in Central Luzon's six provinces and on its conflicts with other local communist movements.

No deadline or periodic goals were cited either.

But Senior Supt. Reynaldo Berroya, former PNP intelligence chief and now Central Luzon police director, clarified that the AFP-PNP common agenda was not forged because the security threat from the CPP and NPA has turned into an alarming rate.

"It's not that serious. (The MOA) just formalizes what we have been doing on the ground," he said in a press conference after the signing.

The signing came on the heels of the recovery of 100 firearms and the "neutralization" of 30 NPA rebels, according to Maj. General Rodolfo Garcia, chief of the Army's Northern Luzon Command which operates in the Ilocos, Cagayan Valley, Cordillera and Central Luzon regions and Aurora province.

"We have the least problem here compared to Southern Tagalog and Bicol, the Visayas and Mindanao as far as the CPP-NPA-NDF is concerned . . . (W)e have constantly scored. *Kokonti na ang kalaban dito, pinapahina pa natin* (There are few enemies here and we're exerting effort to weaken them)," he said.

Maj. General Ernesto Carolina, chief of the Army's 7th Infantry Division, said the joint agenda particularly addresses the "peculiar nature of the insurgency in Central Luzon" which, he said, has become a "business enterprise."

Without citing figures, he said the region, after Calabarzon (Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal and Quezon), is the second biggest source of funds for the guerrilla operations of the NPA in poor villages in the country.

Carolina said the CPP's revolutionary taxation program was "more after the money-making aspect rather than ideology."

"Jointly we are confident that we will be able to cripple this financial business enterprise," he said.

IN CELEBRATION OF BRAIN ATTACK AWARENESS WEEK

2nd PHILIPPINE CONGRESS ON BRAIN ATTACK
"THINKING GLOBALLY, ACTING LOCALLY"
Part II: Organizing Stroke Services

and

3rd BIENNIAL CONVENTION of the STROKE SOCIETY OF THE PHILIPPINES

the STROKE SOCIETY of the PHILIPPINES

AUGUST 20-22, 2001, MANILA MIDTOWN HOTEL Pedro Gil St., Ermita, Manila

MESSAGES

I extend my warmest greetings to the men and women of the Stroke Society of the Philippines, the National Center for Disease Prevention and Control and the Critical Care Nurses Association of the Philippines, Inc. as they host the 2nd Philippine Congress on Brain Attack.

The era of technology revolution has made it imperative upon Filipino health professionals to keep abreast of the latest developments in their specialized field. Their foremost challenge is to constantly re-examine the quality of their services and keep apprised of knowledge and technical developments in their field as they go on with the daily conduct of their profession.

This year's theme, "STROKE: Thinking Globally, Acting Locally Part II: Organizing Stroke Services," clearly articulates your unity and eagerness to meet the challenges posed by the present times and more effectively safeguard the health of our people. The thrust of this gathering augurs well for government efforts to encourage Filipino professionals to make quality medical services easily accessible and affordable to those who need these services most. Its larger importance can be fully appreciated in the context of the need to mobilize the resources of civil society to meet the growing health needs of our people.

Indeed, the increasing health demands of the Filipinos put much pressure and strain to the limited resources of our government. We count on the support of dedicated and hardworking professionals like you to provide our people with quality, responsive and accessible health care services.

Mabuhay kayong lahat!

GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO
President
Republic of the Philippines

My warmest felicitations to the participants of the 2nd Philippine Congress on Brain Attack on August 20-22, 2001 at the Manila Midtown hotel.

I would like to congratulate the Stroke Society of the Philippines and the Critical Care Nurses Association of the Philippines, Inc. in coordination with the National Center for Disease Prevention and Control of the Department of Health for hosting this significant event.

Your theme, "Stroke: Thinking Globally, Acting Locally Part II: Organizing Stroke Services" is very timely as strokes increasingly assume a growing threat to public health. Based on 1993 estimates, brain attacks are responsible for about 28 deaths per 100,000 population.

To revert this trend, the need for all stakeholders to get involved in stroke prevention, management and control to come together and develop evidence-based strategies to address this problem cannot be over-emphasized. We can no longer afford to brush aside the urgency of instituting public health measures to curb the devastating socio-economic burden of this disease, not only to individual families, but to the whole nation as well.

I wish that all of you would have a very productive interaction in this Congress. It is my ardent hope that whatever you will learn from this gathering will be applied in your respective workplaces and greatly contribute to the reduction of the incidence of brain attack.

Mabuhay kayong lahat!

MANUEL M. DAYRIT, MD., MSc.
Secretary
Department of Health

PROGRAMME OF ACTIVITIES

AUGUST 20, 2001
POST GRADUATE COURSE ON STROKE NURSING

TIME	ACTIVITY	SPEAKERS	VENUE
7:30 AM	I REGISTRATION		Foyer II
9:00 AM	II OPENING CEREMONIES INVOCATION NATIONAL ANTHEM WELCOME AND OPENING REMARKS		Intramuros
	III SCIENTIFIC SESSIONS:		
9:15 AM	INTRODUCTION TO THE COURSE	JOVEN R. CUANANG, M.D.	
9:30 AM	FUNCTIONAL NEUROANATOMY AND NEUROLOGICAL EXAMINATION	ARTEMIO A. ROXAS, M.D	
10:15 AM	PATHOLOGY AND IMAGING OF STROKE	JOVEN R. CUANANG, M.D.	
11:00 AM	STROKE RATING SCALE	ROBERT N. GAN, M.D.	
11:45 AM	OPEN FORUM		
12:00 NN	IV LUNCH SYMPOSIUM "POST STROKE DEPRESSION" (PFIZER INC.) V SCIENTIFIC SESSION:	MARGARET JULIE B. QUIREJERO, M.D.	
2:00 PM	PRE-HOSPITAL AND EMERGENCY ROOM CARE ACUTE STROKE CARE	MS. ANN YINN	
2:45 PM	a. Management of Increased Intracaranial Pressure	ABDIAS V. AQUINO, M.D.	
3:15 PM	b. Nursing Care	MS. ANN YINN	
3:45 PM	c. Rehabilitaton	BETTY D. MANCAO, M.D.	
4:15 PM	OPEN FORUM		
4:45 PM	VI CLOSING CEREMONIES		

AUGUST 21, 2001

TIME	ACTIVITY	SPEAKERS	VENUE
8:00 AM	OPENING OF EXHIBITS		Foyer I
8:30 AM	I OPENING CEREMONIES INVOCATION NATIONAL ANTHEM WELCOME REMARKS PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS	LRI CHOIR ESTER S. BITANGA, M.D. Over-All Congress Chair JOVEN R. CUANANG, M.D. President, Stroke Society of the Philippines BETTY D. MANCAO, M.D. Master of Ceremonies	Intramuros
9:00 AM	II SCIENTIFIC SESSION: INTRODUCTION TO THE SESSION	JOSE C. NAVARRO, M.D. Chair, Scientific Commitee	
9:15 AM	III PLENARY LECTURES: ORGANIZING STROKE SERVICES	GRAEME J. HANKEY, M.D. Intro: Jose C. Navarro, M.D.	
10:00 AM	PRE-HOSPITAL EMERGENCY MEDICAL SYSTEMS	TEODORO J. HERBOSA, M.D. Intro: Ester S. Bitanga, M.D.	
10:45 AM	HOSPITAL LEVEL/EMERGENCY ROOM LEVEL	ROBERT N. GAN, M.D. Intro: Dr. Alejandro Diaz	
11:30 NN	OPEN FORUM		
12:00 NN	VI LUNCH SYMPOSIUM "PROGRESS" (SERVIER PHILS. INC.)	ARTEMIO A. ROXAS, M.D.	
2:00 PM	V WORKSHOPS GROUP I - PRE-HOSPITAL EMERGENCY ROOM LEVEL	ESTER S. BITANGA, M.D. (Facilator)	Intramuros C
	GROUP II - HOSPITAL LEVEL EMERGENCY/ROOM LEVEL	ABDIAS V. AQUINO, M.D. (Facilator)	Intramuros B
	GROUP III - STROKE NURSING WET CLINIC	MS. ANN YINN and BETTY D. MANCAO, M.D. (Facilitators)	Intramuros A

AUGUST 22, 2001

TIME	ACTIVITY	SPEAKERS	VENUE
8:00 AM	I PLENARY SESSIONS PRESENTATION OF WORKSHOP OUTPUT	ESTER S. BITANGA, M.D. ABDIAS V. AQUINO, M.D.	Intramuros
8:30 AM	REACTIONS	REACTORS: GRAEME J. HANKEY, M.D. ROBERT N. GAN, M.D. TEODORO J. HERBOSA, M.D. MS. ANN YINN LADISLAO N. YUCHONGCO, M.D.	
9:30 AM	FINAL MESSAGE	MANUEL M. DAYRIT, M.D. Secretary, Department of Health	
10:00 AM	II LECTURE "VITATOPS"	GRAEME J. HANKEY, M.D.	
10:30 AM	III SANOFI SYNTHELABO/SSP RESEARCH PAPER CONTEST		
12:30 PM	IV LUNCH SYMPOSIUM "HYPERTENSION AND STROKE" (SANOFI SYNTHELABO)	GRAEME J. HANKEY, M.D.	
2:30 PM	V AWARDING CEREMONIES		
3:00 PM	VI BUSINESS MEETING AND CLOSING CEREMONIES		

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MESSAGES

Greetings from the STROKE SOCIETY OF THE PHILIPPINES!

Welcome to the 3rd Biennial Convention and the 2nd Philippines Congress on Brain Attack!

With the completion of the Guidelines on Prevention, Treatment and Rehabilitation of Brain Attack during the 1st Philippine Congress in 1999, we now continue our work in addressing the problem of Brain Attack in our country. We continue to cooperate with the Department of Health, National Center for Disease Prevention and Control and this time with the Critical Care Nurses Association of the Philippines Inc. We have gone far and wide all over the country to spread the new guidelines that we have produced during the 1st Philippine Congress to all our colleagues who are out in the field as first line care-givers for the prevention, treatment and rehabilitation of brain attack. This time we embark on a well planned implementation of stroke services from the pre-hospital emergency care level to the emergency room. We also are on an aggressive campaign for the establishment of Stroke Teams and Acute Stroke Units.

The fight against brain attack must be a well concerted effort of government and non-governmental associations through a phalanx of experts in the medical and allied professions and the general public. Brain attack remains to be the 3rd cause of death and the no. 1 cause of disability in the Philippines. With everyone cooperating, I am sure we will be successful in our endeavor in creating a Stroke-Free Philippines.

Joven R. Cuanang, M.D.
JOVEN R. CUANANG, M.D.
President
Stroke Society of the Philippines

On behalf of the Organizing Committee, I am pleased to welcome all of you to the 3rd Biennial Convention of the Stroke Society of the Philippines and the 2nd Philippine Congress on Brain Attack on August 20-22, 2001 at the Manila Midtown Hotel.

This Congress is the continuation of the first one we had in 1999 where we completed the "Guidelines for the Prevention, Treatment and Rehabilitation of Brain Attack" in the Philippines. Following the general theme of "Thinking Globally, Acting Locally" we shall lay down the strategies and policies in organizing stroke services in the different regions of the country where these guidelines can be put to use.

We have invited representatives from the Department of Health and a phalanx of experts in the medical and allied professions who are involved in the management of stroke patients to participate actively during the congress especially in the workshop.

A postgraduate course on stroke nursing is designed to educate our nurses and other members of the stroke team everything they have to know about stroke.

Once again we will have the Sanofi Synthelado - Stroke Society of the Philippines Research Paper Contest where outstanding researches on Stroke done in the country will compete for the much coveted "Stroke Research Prize."

The satellite symposia organized by our Corporate Members will tackle very important issues in stroke care like post-stroke depression, stroke prevention, and management of hypertension in stroke.

I am certain that this will be a happy and fulfilling occasion for everyone of us who share the same vision of reducing the dreadful effects of stroke among our countrymen.

ESTER S. BITANGA, M.D.
Over-All Congress Chair
2nd Philippine Congress on Brain Attack

Organized by the Stroke Society of the Philippines in Cooperation with the Department of Health and Critical Care Nurses Association of the Phils., Inc.

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Critics say plebiscite funds wasted

COTABATO CITY—The government spent P500 million in Tuesday's plebiscite but some officials are asking where the money went.

"Spending so much in a plebiscite, which many Mindanaoans rejected, was a waste of money and an exercise in futility," said Mahendra Madjilon, information chief of Gov. Nur Misuari of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM).

Madjilon claimed that Misuari's call for a boycott succeeded in areas where he has influence.

Madjilon also cited as a contributing factor to the low turnout of voters the non-participation of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and a petition by the 15-member MNLF executive council before the Supreme Court, which sought to postpone the plebiscite.

The executive council is an anti-Misuari faction in the MNLF.

Civil and religious groups here asked for an audit of the P500 million which was disbursed by the Commission on Elections in the wake of complaints that the poll body failed to launch a massive information drive on the plebiscite.

Fr. Benjamin Toreto, social action director and head of the Justice and Peace Ministry of the Archdiocese of Cotabato, said his group is looking into allegations that there are moves to alter the result of the plebiscite to make this city part of the expanded ARMM.

"We will not allow this (manipulation) to happen. The true will of (the) electorate shall prevail and we will see to it that their rights (of suffrage) are not violated," Toreto said.

The suspicion came about after two members of the city board of canvassers (CBC) failed to show up on Tuesday for the canvassing.

Arturo Cocjin, city election officer and CBC chair, said the board failed to convene at 6 p.m. Tuesday because city prosecutor Jose Bagasao and city schools division superintendent Ibrahim Guiapar were absent.

Bagasao showed up hours later. Guiapar, however, could not be located.

Cocjin, in turn, was criticized for his failure to find a replacement for Guiapar.

Guiapar surfaced Wednesday but said he was not notified about the need for him to report for the canvassing.

Cocjin denied it, claiming that the notice was already served as early as Aug. 9, which detailed among others, Guiapar's designation as member of the board of canvassers.

A number of residents here have aired suspicion that the poll body could be deliberately trying to manipulate the result of the plebiscite in favor of the Yes vote.

"If this (is the case), we would take (to) the streets and air our protest," said Father Toreto.

Abdullah Andang, assistant city schools superintendent, said he was willing to take over Guiapar's place as board member if only to avoid any delay in the canvassing.

Andang said the board could have canvassed all the votes as early as Tuesday night if Guiapar had appeared on time.

Malacañang claimed that with the trend in voting, there is a big possibility that the cities of Marawi and Cotabato would become part of the ARMM.

About 60 percent of residents of the two cities are Muslims.

President Macapagal-Arroyo was quoted by her press secretary to have confirmed the "strong possibility" of Cotabato and Marawi joining the ARMM despite opposition from some Muslim leaders.

Vice Mayor Japal Guiani, who campaigned for a No vote, said the stand of the city legislative council was for the plebiscite to be deferred to give the government enough time to launch an information drive.

Cotabato, a component city of Maguindanao, is Central Mindanao's regional center and the seat of the autonomous region.

Business leaders and government workers here were apprehensive that if the Yes vote wins, government offices under Central Mindanao will be moved out to South Cotabato.

"If this city becomes part of ARMM, then it may become ARMM's permanent seat of government and the executive order of former President Corazon Aquino transferring Central Mindanao's regional capital to Koronadal City would then be realized," businessman Oscar Tan Abing said. ***Charlie Señase, PDI Mindanao Bureau***

Iloilo councilors seek probe of deal with retail giant

By Ma. Diosa Labiste
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—The committee on good government of the city council has started an investigation of the compromise deal between retail giant SM Prime Holdings and the city government that was said to be "grossly disadvantageous" to the city.

The committee, chaired by Councilor Raul Gonzalez Jr., has also invited city hall officials to shed light on how much SM Prime Holdings should pay the city government for constructing the SM City Iloilo mall in 1996.

Reelected councilors were recently criticized because they were part of the previous council that approved the P3 million compromise agreement between the city and SM Prime Holdings Inc. over the payment of building permit fees. They came up with the agreement even if most of them say that SM owes the city nothing.

Authorization

In Resolution 2001-539 last June 13 (2001), Councilors Ma. Rita Bascos-Sarabia, Joshua Alim, Marietta Orleans, Ramon Cua Locsin, Erlinda Liberiaga, Vicente Gengos, Julienne Baronda and Vice Mayor Victor Facultad, then a councilor, have authorized former City Mayor Mansueto Malabor to sign a P3 million compromise agreement between the city and SM.

But city treasurer Romeo Manikan had refused to accept the amount because he re-assessed the SM building permit fee at P21,847,000, to include a 25 percent surcharge and accumulated interests that totaled P9,145,000, as of June 2001.

Manikan derived his figures from rates mandated by Ordinance 399, which computes the fees based on total building costs. On the other hand, the previous city engineer, Jose Occeña, who assessed the SM City building permit at P583,182, said the basis for computation should be the total floor area of the building as mandated by the National Building Code.

The compromise agreement came after the city council amended in February this year the provision of Ordinance 399 because it went against the National Building Code that computes the fees on the basis of floor area. Councilor Sarabia said that the ordinance was void.

'Goodwill'

But Sarabia, said the retail giant is willing to part with P3 million as a sign of "goodwill," not payment, for the building permit fees.

In Resolution No. 2001-566 passed June 20, the council also ordered SM to pay after the deal shall have been signed by Malabor. The mayor was given 10 days to sign the document after the copy of the resolution was transmitted to his office. SM's Hans Sy has to sign for the retail firm.

But Malabor ended his term of office on June 30 without signing the compromise agreement. The incumbent, Mayor Jerry Trenas, in a telephone interview, said he did not also sign anything in relation to the compromise deal.

In a public hearing Tuesday, Manikan said he advised Malabor not to sign the compromise agreement because it was "grossly disadvantageous" to the city. He defended the fees levied on SM saying that RA 7160, or the Local Government Code, mandates the city to enact its own revenue earning measures.

Manikan said SM did not protest the re-assessment he sent in June last year. But when SM finally did three months later, it was already past the 60-day period allowed to enter an appeal as provided for by the local tax code.

Manikan said if other small taxpayers comply with Ordinance 399, giant companies like SM should do likewise.

LIFE'S CROSSINGS MELVIN GASCON

Life is a forked road for this man and his boys who, in their struggle to survive, are forced to walk kilometers from the forest and cross a shallow river in Sta. Fe, Nueva Vizcaya carrying their daily load—illegally cut lumber.

EASTERN VISAYAS

304 firms not paying minimum wage

By Joey Gabieta
PDI Visayas Bureau

TACLOBAN CITY—At least 304 out of 790 business establishments here were found not paying the minimum wage to their workers during an inspection made by the labor department.

Carlos Boteros, labor department regional director, said the erring establishments were engaged in services and trade in Leyte and some parts of Samar.

The labor department has scheduled an inspection of establishments in this city.

But Boteros has a ready explanation for the firms' failure to pay the minimum wage—either they have not been informed of a new wage order increasing daily wages by P14 or the firms are financially hard up.

In Eastern Visayas, the minimum wage for non-agricultural workers was pegged at P177, while in other provinces, it is P173.

Agriculture workers in Leyte should receive P158 a day while workers in other provinces in the region should get P154 a day.

Boteros said firms found guilty of not paying the minimum wage would be told to do so.

If the firms continue to refuse to pay the minimum wage, he said, then the labor department would sue these firms to enable the government to seize the firms' assets or pieces of property.

Boteros said business establishments may be exempted from paying the minimum wage should they be able to prove that they are suffering from financial losses or could not afford to pay the minimum wage.

He said in the region, only 10 establishments have availed themselves of exemption from the minimum wage law. These firms, he said, are mostly into small-scale businesses.

Under existing labor laws, an establishment may be exempted from paying the minimum wage if it becomes bankrupt or if it could show proof that paying the minimum wage could lead to its closure.

According to Boteros, the labor department is having a difficult time monitoring all 5,000 establishments in the region. These include retail and wholesale stores.

Aetas fall ill after flight from Pinatubo

BOTOLAN, Pampanga—At least 20 Aeta evacuees who fled the danger of Mt. Pinatubo's crater-lake overflowing have turned sick at the Baquilan resettlement site here since last week, but little help is coming their way.

Diarrhea, fever and colds have afflicted the members of the tribe, Apong de la Cruz, tribal chief of 44 Aeta families from Sitio Baytan in Barangay Burgos, told the INQUIRER.

At least five children previously stricken with malaria are getting no treatment either since the tribe evacuated to Baquilan last Aug. 4, De la Cruz said.

The women were treating the sick through *lunas bundok* (herbal medicines), he said.

Only the nuns from the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary have been providing them with rice, medicines and tents, he said.

De la Cruz said municipal personnel of the Department of Social Welfare and Development came to conduct a census.

Food provisions, according to him, have run out since Monday, forcing Aeta men to go back to Baytan, six hours by hiking from Baquilan, to gather sweet potatoes and vegetables.

The retrieval of food in Baytan was perilous, according to Sito Cabulag. He said the men risked crossing the Malumboy and Maraunot rivers where lahar flows on rainy days.

Cabulag said 17 families have opted to stay in Baytan, never wanting to go through the travails of evacuations again.

Baytan Aetas, counting about 50 families before the June 1991 eruptions, evacuated four times before they were finally resettled to Baquilan and Loob-Bunga in 1993. Without any land to till in the resettlements, they returned to Burgos and revived farms there.

Although *bakwit* (evacuation) is a dreaded word for Thelma, she joined the second exodus of Baytan Aetas from Pinatubo.

"It's risky staying in the village. Lahar or floods from the crater may reach us. I have to put my four children (in) safety," she said.

Thelma was barely out of her teens when tribe members left their homes after Mt. Pinatubo blew huge mushroom-like clouds of ash, mud, rocks and sand on June 15, 1991.

The second exodus, according to De la Cruz, is a new race for life. With farm animals and a few belongings in tow, he said they trudged out of Baytan after learning from local officials that the water from the crater-lake might overflow or burst.

However, an estimated 500 Aeta families from Palis, Maculcul, Maguisguis, Villar, Moraza, Belbel and Poon Bato have not followed suit.

"We survived the eruptions. We don't want to (die) of drowning (in) floods or lahar flows," De la Cruz said. ***Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk***

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*SOURCE: New England Journal of Medicine 1991; 325, 1261-6

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Ping, Vic face off today

(From page A1)

"proper forum."

Former civilian agent Angelo Mawanay, aka Ador, who has tagged Lacson, former head of the Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force (PAOCTF), as the mastermind of a number of kidnappings and summary executions, apart from linking him to drug trafficking, has also been invited to testify.

Ador also said that Jude Estrada, a son of deposed President Estrada, was involved in drug deals.

When asked about Ador's claims, Corpus said in a radio interview: "That's what we're going to prove before the Senate."

Senate President Franklin Drilon told reporters that "it's about time that evidence be presented before the Senate, and if the evidence was there, Lacson will have to submit a credible defense."

In a news briefing, Drilon said that Corpus and Mawanay would have ample opportunity to present evidence supporting their allegations because apart from today's hearing, they have also been asked to face lawmakers during the Senate question hour on Tuesday.

Guest list

In a separate briefing, Sen. Robert Barbers said that the committees have also invited Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes, Villanueva and ex-PAOCTF agent Mary Grace Ong, alias Rosebud, to shed light on a military intelligence investigation into Lacson's alleged involvement in criminal activities.

LACSON

CORPUS

Barbers said he expects all those invited to show up today. "They will face (much) embarrassment if they do not make it," he said.

Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr. said he was "asking Isafp chief Victor Corpus to come up to the Senate and bring the evidence that he has in all of these crimes so that opportunity will be given to those who are charged to reply."

But Pimentel added that opposition senators would not turn today's hearing into an inquisition against Lacson's critics.

In a telephone interview, he said the hearing would be conducted "dispassionately" and would center on the "bungling" of Isafp agents in their intelligence work, apparently referring to a mix-up in photographs of suspected drug lord Kim Wong and a Senate aide.

Barbers, who heads the public order panel, similarly said the hearing would be "fair." The senators will consider holding an "executive session" if those invited say that their information is classified, he added.

The inquiry was scheduled in response to two separate resolutions. Barbers filed a resolution seeking an inquiry into Mawanay's charges against Lacson and the now defunct PAOCTF. Sen. Vicente Sotto filed the second, asking the Senate to investigate the possible involvement of military officials in the fabrication of evidence against Lacson.

The three panels will also tackle Barbers' concern, raised in a speech, that the Isafp could be spying on senators.

Careful, careful

The militant group Kilusang Mayo Uno urged the Isafp to "be less careless" and get its facts straight lest Lacson get off scot-free.

KMU chair and Bayan Muna Rep. Crispin Beltran warned that the careless handling of the case being built against Lacson could eventually prove beneficial to the controversial senator.

"They should get all their facts, documents, and witness testimonials straight before having the cases filed against Lacson," Beltran said.

"If there are any more botch-ups, Lacson just might well end up acquitted . . . It will be catastrophic if this happens," he cautioned.

The labor leader said the government "should strike while the iron is hot" by issuing hold-departure orders against Lacson and his alleged accomplices in drug trafficking.

"The government shouldn't beat around the bush and pretend that that the case against Lacson is no big deal because it is. Lacson is as big as the proverbial fish can get, and he should have been caught long ago before," Beltran said. ***With reports from Carlito Pablo, Andrea Trinidad and Philip Tubeza***

Corpus' boss downplays boo-boo

By Carlito Pablo and Martin Marfil

COL. VICTOR Corpus may have committed a boo-boo when he presented the wrong photo of alleged drug lord Kim Wong, but as far as the military leadership is concerned, this is a minor incident that should not detract from the issue of Sen. Panfilo Lacson's alleged hidden wealth.

"People make mistakes," Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Diomedio Villanueva said. "Whether or not his credibility will be affected depends on the outcome of the investigation."

Villanueva, Corpus' junior by a year at the Philippine Military Academy, said the head of the Intelligence Service of the AFP (Isafp) enjoys the full support of the military's rank-and-file.

"Of course, he is our commander and we support him," he said. "He is a commander of an organization within the AFP . . . therefore he has the disposition to undertake action on his own."

Villanueva said Corpus regularly reports to him on the progress of the Isafp's investigation of Lacson.

"We are taking note of his findings vis-à-vis the security situation in the country because the drug problem is an international threat," he said.

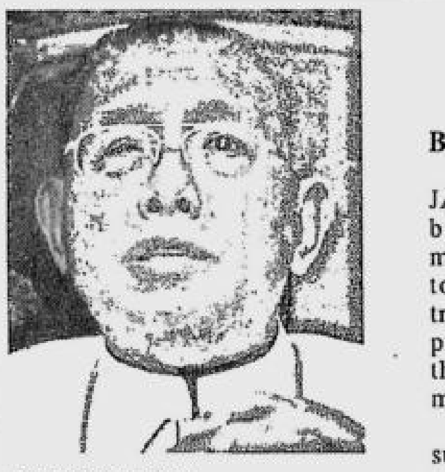
President Macapagal-Arroyo's confidence in Corpus also remains unshaken, presidential spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao said when asked to comment on some legislators' calls for Corpus' resignation.

"The President shares the AFP's views and confidence in Colonel Corpus," Tiglao said in a press briefing yesterday.

In Cebu City, Ms Macapagal was asked to comment on the "gag order" and the possibility that Corpus would be replaced.

"Colonel Corpus reports to the chief of staff of the Armed Forces, so any instructions to him will be given by the AFP chief of staff," Ms Macapagal said.

Villanueva, reiterating that he has not put Corpus under a gag order, told the INQUIRER: "I think there is no need to sanction him."


CARDINAL SIN

Corpus gets Cardinal Sin's blessings

By Philip Tubeza

JAIME Cardinal Sin, the Archbishop of Manila, supports military intelligence chief Victor Corpus' "fight for the truth," according to a Jesuit priest who was present when the cardinal and the colonel met Tuesday.

"The cardinal was very, very supportive. He encouraged Corpus and said he was doing the right thing so long as he was fighting for the truth," said Fr. Tito Caluag, SJ, Ateneo de Manila University's vice president for planning and development/alumni affairs.

"The cardinal thanked him for his courage and said that he would be praying for Corpus," the priest added.

Caluag earlier figured in news reports after he backed Corpus by saying that it was the Jesuit fathers who were the "handlers" of Ador, a controversial witness who is under the Isafp's protection.

Caluag told the INQUIRER that Corpus visited Sin for half an hour on Tuesday afternoon at the cardinal's residence at Villa San Miguel in Mandaluyong.

Although it was supposed to be a "pastoral" visit, Sin and Corpus also talked about Sen. Panfilo Lacson's alleged money laundering and other criminal activities, Caluag said.

However, Corpus did not disclose anything about Lacson's case that media had not reported, he added.

"The cardinal told him not to be afraid but he added that (Corpus) should also be careful (about his personal safety)," Caluag said in an interview on Wednesday.

Wong's sudden departure sign of guilt–Corpus

(From page A1)

forum at the Holiday Inn in Manila.

"His fear is that the Isafp agents were not really after his picture but were out to pick him up," the senator said in Filipino.

But Corpus dismissed the claim, saying this was "just the reason they're using" to explain Wong's departure.

Corpus had accused Lacson and Wong of shipping illegal drugs into the country. Both men have denied this and said Wong had several businesses, including a chain of restaurants.

But GMA-7 quoted the Filipino-Chinese Chambers of Commerce Inc. as saying that the organization and its affiliates did not count Wong as a member.

Jose Ngaw, secretary general of the organization, said Wong's name did not even ring a bell among Chinese-Filipino businessmen.

Vicente Tan, secretary general of the Chinese-Filipino Business Club, also said Wong was not included in his group's list of members, according to the television report.

Willing

Lacson said Wong phoned him Wednesday night to say that he was willing to testify in any investigation of allegations that he and the senator were involved in the illegal drug trade.

The senator quoted Wong as saying that Chavez would know where to reach him.

Chavez, however, refused to confirm Wong's whereabouts. But he told the INQUIRER that his client "will (come) back as soon as I tell him to."

On Wong's return, Chavez said, he would file libel charges against Corpus for besmirching his reputation. He said a similar charge could also be filed against the INQUIRER, but only as a nominal respondent.

"We, therefore, challenge Colonel Corpus to file the appropriate criminal cases against Mr. Kim Wong if he has evidence to prove that Mr. Kim Wong is a drug lord. Then Mr. Kim Wong will answer the charges," Chavez said, adding:

"My client is not guilty. They got the wrong guy. There may be a Kim Wong who is a drug lord, but this isn't him."

Malacañang is keeping mum on Wong's departure.

Rigoberto Tiglao, spokesperson for President Macapagal-Arroyo, said "it's an operation of the Isafp and, as we have emphasized, (AFP spokesperson Brig. Gen. Edilberto Adan) should give the operational details."

Straight

Chavez held a press conference yesterday at the Intramuros Golf Links to relay to the media three salient points about his client.

The first of these, he said, was Wong's legitimacy as a straight businessman.

He said Wong was in the garments business, and had supplied T-shirts for such clients as Mondragon Philippines and even the Citizens' Drug Watch of former Bohol Rep. Ernesto "Boy" Herrera.

"I have talked to Tony Gonzalez of Mondragon and even Boy Herrera. They told me that in the course of their business with Wong, they did not hear anything about Wong's alleged involvement in drugs," Chavez said.

All three men were officials of the Aquino administration—Chavez as solicitor general, Gonzales as tourism secretary, and Herrera as labor secretary.

The second point that Chavez wanted to get across was his challenge to Corpus to name the judges and justices supposedly on the payroll of drug lords in the country.

"Unless he names these judges and justices, every one in the judiciary would be suspect," Chavez said.

Corpus recently said that some members of the judiciary were making it difficult for law enforcement agencies to track down and arrest drug lords because of the issuance of temporary restraining orders and injunctions.

In a statement, Chavez said Corpus' "reckless accusation" that Wong "is a drug lord and wields influence over the courts" was "a brazen lie."

"We challenge Colonel Corpus to indicate the docket numbers of these cases and the names of judges and justices who were influenced by Mr. Kim Wong into issuing TROs or injunctions," he added.

Chavez's third point was that Wong left the country to protect his life and not to flee from justice.

"The public should hold Colonel Corpus responsible for any untoward incident affecting the safety and life of Mr. Kim Wong," the lawyer said.

Asked to comment on Lacson's alleged links with the illegal drug trade, Chavez said: "I am not in any way involved with Lacson's case. He has his own lawyers."

Sneaking out

Leaders of militant groups said the flight of Wong and other persons close to Lacson was "vital proof" that the senator was guilty of the crimes he was being accused of.

Rodolfo Sambajon, chair of the Pambansang Lakas ng Kilusang Mamamalakaya ng Pilipinas (Pamalakaya), noted that Wong left for Hong Kong without giving an official statement about his "pleasure trip."

"Lacson's men are slowly sneaking out of the country in the midst of the controversy surrounding their boss," Sambajon said. "The mere fact that his men escaped from government authorities is a vital proof of his guilt."

Sambajon noted that before Wong's sudden departure, Senior Superintendents Michael Ray Aquino and Cesar Mancao, two of Lacson's most trusted lieutenants in the defunct Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force, fled abroad just as the senator's alleged dollar accounts in foreign banks were being exposed.

"We were not born yesterday," Sambajon said. "These events give us an idea on how to look at the Lacson puzzle."

Sambajon said only Lacson could disclose the whereabouts of Mancao, Aquino and Wong.

"It is hard to believe that Lacson does not know the activities of his men. He heads the most organized crime syndicate in the country, if Corpus' reports are true," Sambajon said.

Bayan Muna Rep. Crispin Beltran said the government should "strike while the iron is hot" and issue hold-departure orders on Lacson and all others alleged to be his partners and accomplices in drug trafficking and money laundering.

"Lacson's partners and henchmen are slipping out of the country one by one," Beltran pointed out.

The party-list representative also said the Isafp should be less careless in handling the money laundering and drug trafficking case being built against Lacson.

"It should get all its facts, documents, and witnesses' testimonies straight before having the case filed against Lacson. If there are any technicalities or any more mix-ups, these will all work in Lacson's favor," he said.

Beltran warned that with "more botch-ups" like the wrong photo of Wong that Corpus presented to the media, "Lacson just might end up acquitted, and he can't be tried again on the same charges because it will be case of double jeopardy."

"It will be catastrophic if this happens," Beltran added. ***With reports from Volt Contreras, Christine Avendaño and Gerald G. Lacuarta***

Chavez's defense of Wong dismays compañeros

By Christian V. Esguerra

LEGAL eagles have a mouthful to say about ex-Solicitor General Francisco Chavez's decision to take on Kim Wong as client.

"I'm very dismayed. It's a big gamble on his part," said human rights lawyer Romeo Capulong, who heads a team of private prosecutors investigating Sen. Panfilo Lacson's alleged money laundering.

Capulong noted that Chavez could have agreed to serve as lawyer for Lacson's alleged financier in the illegal drug trade for a "much deeper reason."

"Perhaps the fee was too high," he said.

Leonard de Vera of the Equal Justice for All Movement (E-Just) took a diplomatic tack, saying "lawyers have their own sets of values."

"Strictly speaking, the rules of court do not bar a lawyer from defending a person who's publicly perceived as notorious," De Vera pointed out.

But if he were Chavez, he said, he would not lawyer for clients with "a shady character" like Wong because "life is too short."

"Lawyers are said to be playing with words because some still defend people who have already admitted guilt to them," De Vera added. "They say it's their job. But that's a shallow reason. It's a question of morality."

According to Capulong, Chavez and Wong are "very close friends," and "people might even suspect it was Lacson who asked him to lawyer for Wong."

Having Wong as client can affect public perception on Chavez's search for the Marcoses' hidden wealth, Capulong said.

As solicitor general during the Aquino administration, Chavez was legal counsel for the Presidential Commission on Good Government in its quest for the Marcos wealth. He is still active in the search today in a private capacity.

Chavez also worked closely with Capulong and De Vera in the aborted impeachment trial of ousted President Joseph Estrada.

Capulong, however, clarified that Chavez was never officially part of the team of private lawyers because two congressmen-members of the public prosecution had blocked the latter's participation.

During the impeachment trial, Chavez was among the fiercest critics of Estrada and his protégé Lacson.

Aetas sent to drain Pinatubo crater lake

(From page A1)

flow out of Mt. Pinatubo's crater by November this year.

"The situation is serious. It's very real. We don't have much time," Oxfam marine geologist Dr. Kelvin Rodolfo said at that time.

Botolan residents, Rodolfo warned, would have only several minutes to prepare once the massive lahar flow reaches the Baquilan River. The river runs through Botolan and is connected with the Balin Baquero and Maraunot rivers that flow from Mt. Pinatubo.

Over the past 10 years since its eruption, Mt. Pinatubo has collected in its crater-lake rainwater that has risen 10 meters every year, said Rodolfo, who's a native of Zambales.

The canal project will be accomplished by 90 Aetas, according to Dr. Raymundo Punongbayan, Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology chief.

The first batch of workers will determine the alignment of the trench, designed to be 5 meters high, 5 meters wide and 100 meters long, according to Eduardo Bautista, one of two Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) engineers supervising the project. The work is expected to be completed in 22 days.

On completion of the initial five-meter notch, geologists predict another five meters of already-weakened wall would give way, draining 15 million cubic meters of the lake's 200 million cubic meters of water in five hours.

About 200 villagers in the likely path of the water flow have already moved to safer areas. Disaster officials plan to warn other nearby residents when workers are ready to breach the crater.

Race against time

Racing against time on the heels of a three-day delay due to poor coordination, fund unavailability and unfinished arrangements among government agencies, the Aetas decided to ascend Mt. Pinatubo from Barangay Sta. Juliana in Capas, Tarlac.

Accessing the Maraunot notch from here entailed three days of walk, including a day of perilous climb, Willy Bulanhigan, the leader of the Aeta laborers, said.

On board three trucks from the Army's Northern Luzon Command, the Aetas crossed the lahar-choked O'Donnel River starting at 6 a.m. yesterday until they reached valleys of lahar at Poong Bungaw, the farthest point that vehicles can navigate on the volcano's Tarlac side.

From there, Bulanhigan, Luisito and Lito de la Cruz, Amor Juliano and Victor Cosme of Loob-Bunga and Vicente Dolojan Jr., Efren Ramos, Jose Manalan, Eddie Lorenzana and Arnel Pacheco of Baquilan began trudging into Mt. Pinatubo's isolated, gray landscape.

Bearing gifts to their god and clutching pick, shovels and limited food provisions, they walked past rivers and hills now budding with greeneries and wild life.

At past noon, they scaled the O'Donnel notch, ambling northwest for two more hours to reach the steep Zambales side of the crater.

Some braved crossing the 300-meter deep crater-lake to transfer the tools and food provisions through a rubber boat from the Pampanga Disaster Coordinating Council.

At the Maraunot notch, the Aetas, minus their *lubay* (g-strings), made their peace offerings to their gods and said their prayers. ***With reports from Reuters, AP***

This is in response to the unfair and inaccurate statement published in major dailies last 16th of July 2001 that claims **PEARL RIVER BRIDGE** (PRB) brand soy sauces contains high level of the chemical 3-MCPD. Investigations by **Guangdong Foodstuffs I/E (Group) Corp.**, the sole & legal owner of the trademark **PEARL RIVER BRIDGE**, into the reports by Food Standards Agency (FSA) in UK regarding this matter found that the four samples of PRB soy sauce containing high levels of 3-MCPD are counterfeits, furthermore, the FSA accepts that the products tested are counterfeits. Thus, steps are being taken to have FSA make it clear on their website that the **PEARL RIVER BRIDGE** product listed in the 'products to be avoided' table were counterfeits. Subsequently, five samples of **GENUINE PEARL RIVER BRIDGE** soy sauce submitted to FSA for testing were found to be in accordance with EU food standards.

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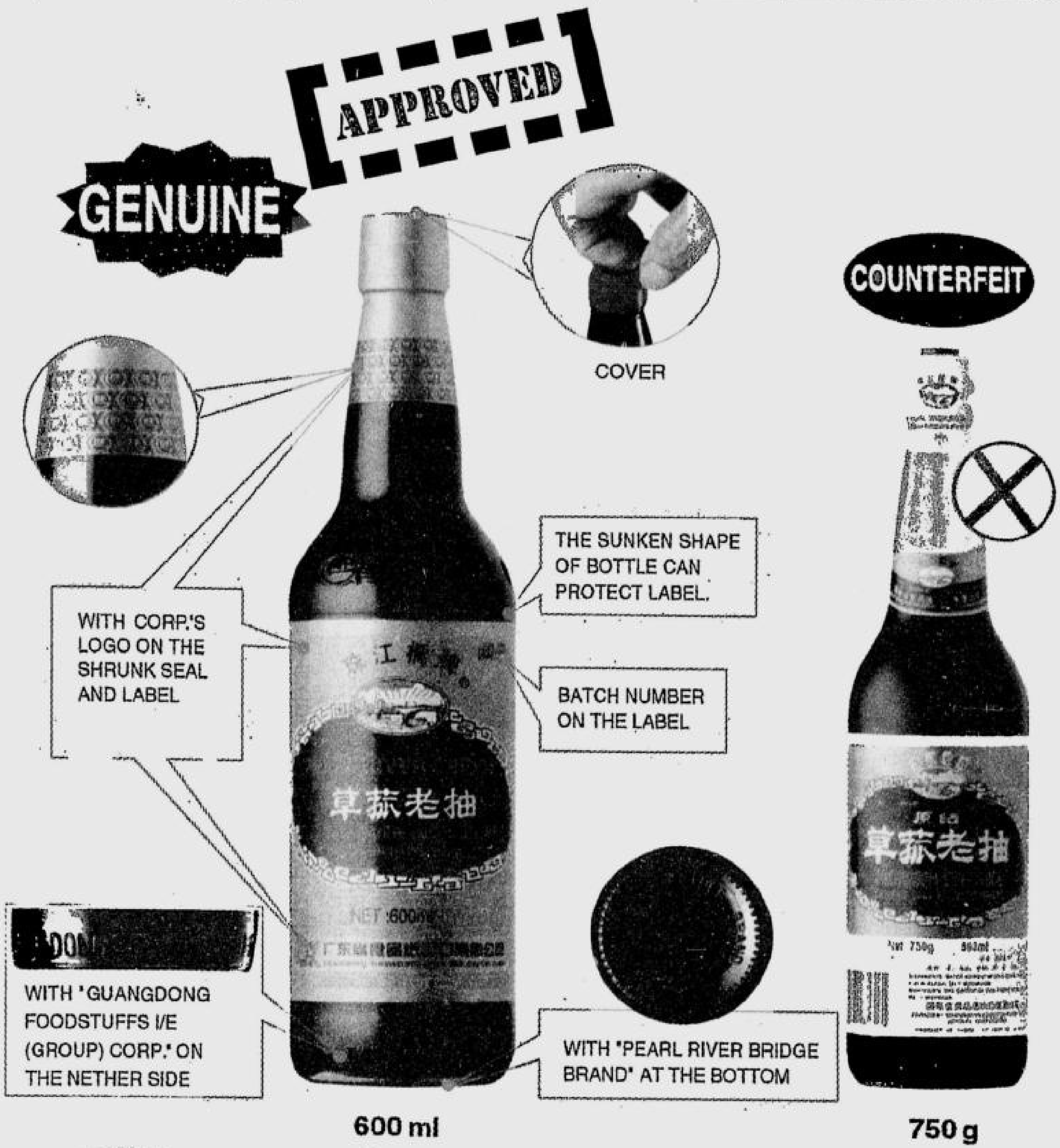
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'What time will you attack us?'

(From page A1)

once, Marissa says now. On other occasions, she heard Abu Sabaya talking to someone on his two-way radio, asking for details as to the exact time and date of an attack. The male voice on the radio gave Abu Sabaya specific details of an impending attack.

"There was no mystery. The bandits knew exactly when to move and when the military would attack. They were always informed ahead of time," Marissa says. During the 2000 kidnapping, for instance, the bandits and their hostages left Camp Abdurazzak midnight of April 29. Bombs rained on the bandits' lair on April 30, and later that day the military overran the camp.

On the second night of the (escape) trek, Marissa recalls, they crossed Kumalarang River, the biggest river basin in Basilan, somewhere near the village of Atong-atong. They passed at least five military detachments, but those manning the posts seemed to have turned blind and deaf. Some soldiers pretended they did not see the bandits and the hostages, while others deliberately let the group pass.

One time, five militiamen guarding a military detachment even talked to Marissa's guard. "Hurry up while our commander is not looking," the militiaman told (Abu Sayyaf bandit) Abu Tamiya in Tausug. (Marissa could understand Tausug.) The militiaman was a Muslim. He was wearing a red scarf, but what puzzled Marissa was the fact that the soldiers inside the detachment just watched them pass.

Mr. (Reynaldo) Rubio (the principal of Claret School, and himself a March 20, 2001 hostage who suffered grievously at the hands of the Abu Sayyaf) confirms Marissa's story.

The school principal, who has opted to retire from Claret School, said even Father Rhoel (who died in the May 3, 2000 encounter) was frustrated with what he saw during the trek from Mount Punoh Mahadji.

On the third night of the trek, the priest told Marissa and Mr. Rubio. "Did you see that? There are military detachments and they just let us pass. It's hopeless, we can't even trust the military," the priest said.

"I wish that the helicopters would finally see us. I'd rather that they drop bombs on us than continue with this walk," Mr. Rubio said.

The former school principal also remembers the young lieutenant who led their rescue, who was so angry when he found that the machine guns they carried had no firing pins.

In July 2001, at about the same time the national police brought Hector Janjalani, Khaddafy's older brother, from his detention cell in Manila, to his arraignment on kidnapping charges at a trial court in Zamboanga, it was reported that members of the Armed Forces assigned in Basilan were undergoing a loyalty check.

"It is incumbent among us in the AFP to check our people for possible connections or links with the Abu Sayyaf. But we are not doing it just now. We've been doing this since before," a military official was quoted by the press.

The military high command in Manila had earlier announced the relief of a general and a colonel. The two had been part of the effort to track down the bandit group in Mindanao. They were not dismissed from the service, however. They were given new assignments in other areas instead.

FROM "INTO THE MOUNTAIN"

WITNESSES TO THE TRUTH. Teachers of Claret School of Tumahubong in Basilan take a breather after a seminar. Of the nine in the picture, two died at the hands of the Abu Sayyaf: Father Rhoel Gallardo and Anabelle Mendoza (2nd from right). Two survived the ordeal after great hardship: Marissa Rante (2nd from left) and Wenifer Silorio (extreme right), who was eight months pregnant at the time of the kidnapping and who lost her baby. The rest managed to avoid capture, although three children of Joy Reambonanza (4th from left) were kidnapped and the mother of Angie Grado (kneeling) was hacked to death.

WHEN rescued in May, 2000, Marisa Rante, is treated at the Infante Hospital in Isabela, Basilan CHARLIE SACEDA

RP, China reject ransom demands for kidnapped Sinos

(From page A1)

have reportedly demanded a $10-million ransom in exchange for the release of the five captives, who were abducted while paying ransom for another Chinese hostage.

The captors have also called for the Libyan Embassy to intercede in the case, but the Libyans have refused to get involved.

Dureza, who also heads the government negotiating panel with the MILF, said Moro rebels were not involved in the abduction, adding the MILF had even offered to help obtain the release of the five.

MILF spokesperson Eid Kabalu also said his group was not involved in the abduction, and confirmed that the MILF was offering to rescue the captives.

But Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Diomedio Villanueva said the MILF should not launch any operation to get the hostages as it could endanger the ceasefire.

Army spokesperson Maj. Julieto Ando said the military believes the hostages are being held by Tahir Alonto, a leader of a kidnap gang operating in central and southern Mindanao who has links with Hamsa's group.

The three Chinese, Zang Zong Yee, Wang Shung Li and Zho Zhing, and Filipino guide Edwin Lim were seized in the remote village of Datu Paglas in southern Maguindanao on Sunday while delivering a P5-million ransom for Zang Zong Quiang, a Chinese engineer kidnapped in June.

Zang is an engineer with China Import Export Technologies Inc., a Chinese firm working on an irrigation project in the area. He was abducted in Matalam town in North Cotabato on June 20.

Villanueva stressed the Chinese went out to pay the ransom on their own. They did not tell the authorities what they were doing and even eluded their security escorts, he said.

Ando said the Army was stepping up its intelligence efforts to pinpoint the captives.

He earlier said the military could not launch pursuit operations against the kidnappers for fear of violating the ceasefire by clashing with MILF forces believed to be in the same area as the kidnappers. *AFP*

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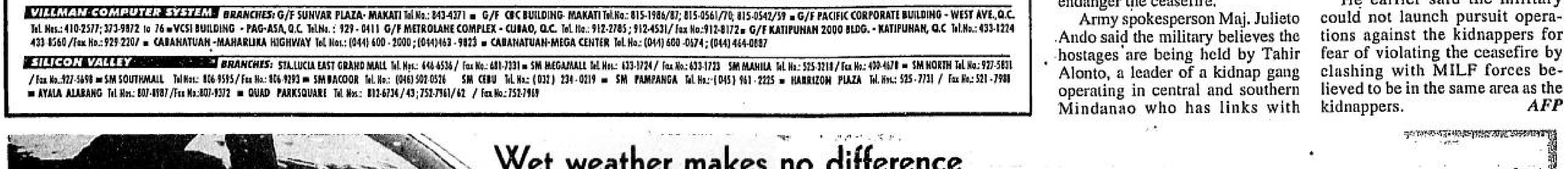

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Calling DOTC Secretary Pantaleon Alvarez

Because you have ignored our overtures for a dialogue and have instead challenged us to go to court, we have no choice but to raise these questions in public:

1. Why did you say there was no conflict of interest when your company, Wintrack Builders, won two huge NAIA 3 contracts from PIATCO while you were Vice Chairman of the Transportation Committee in Congress? Is this not considered graft?
2. Is it true Wintrack Builders, ACS (Alvarez, Clavano and Silva), and Alamo Transport have interlocking ownership and occupy the same building, share the same floor, and even have a common entrance?
3. Is it true that Alamo Transport which is owned by your business partner, the Clavanos, was awarded a MIAA concession while you were still a Congressman and Vice Chairman of the Transportation Committee? And that this same company has outstanding past due obligations with the MIAA in excess of P2.7 million?
4. You said you sold your shares in Wintrack Builders for P20 million. To whom have you sold your shares? Is the sale for real? Does Wintrack still consult you on its affairs?
5. As a Cabinet secretary, have you declared this sale on your assets and liabilities? And have you paid the taxes on the premium gains on these shares?
6. How could Wintrack Builders, with a starting paid up capital of only P625,000, with no apparent track record, win two (2) contracts with NAIA 3 worth in excess of P300 million?
7. Why have you chosen to staunchly defend the PIATCO contract and your friend Jeffrey Cheng? Is it because Wintrack stands to receive millions of pesos from the NAIA 3 contracts?
8. Do you confirm that on June 08, 2001, the MIA-NAIA Association of Service Operators (MASO) wrote you to request for copies of the DOTC-PIATCO Concession Agreement? Did you even bother to reply to MASO's request?
9. Why do you call the PIATCO-DOTC Concession Agreement the best BOT deal the country ever had? Don't you know that the Agreement not only allows PIATCO to postpone its payments to the Government of the Republic of the Philippines (GRP) if it is unable to pay its lenders but that the GRP will be made to assume PIATCO's financial obligations to its foreign lenders if it defaults in payments? Is this not utterly disadvantageous to the government and a clear violation of the BOT Law?
10. Is it true that a number of supplements to the PIATCO/DOTC agreement have not been approved by the NEDA?
11. Are you aware that because of the increased rental rates already posted by PIATCO for the NAIA 3, every tourist and every Filipino traveller will end up paying much higher fees?
12. Is it true that the German partners of PIATCO are up in arms against Jeffrey Cheng due to reported anomalies, quality downgrades, multi-layering of sub-contractors? And is it true that in January 2000, as Vice Chairman of the Transportation Committee in Congress, you even had to write PIATCO's German partners to ease their apprehensions about the PIATCO congressional hearings?

If the foregoing are all true, we believe you should voluntarily resign to protect the image of this administration that appointed you to this honorable position.

THE MIA-NAIA
ASSOCIATION OF SERVICE OPERATORS

PAID AD

GAME 3 TODAY

No cause for alarm yet–Jong

GAME TODAY (Philsports)
7 p.m. – Red Bull
vs SMB (Game 3)

Series at a glance:
GAME 1 – Red Bull 80, SMB 78
GAME 2 – Red Bull 92, SMB 86

By Marc Anthony Reyes

THERE'S no cause for alarm yet for beleaguered defending champion San Miguel Beer. That is, if you will ask San Miguel Beer coach Jong Uichico.

He claimed that the shocking unfolding in their PBA Commissioner's Cup finals series against Batang Red Bull boils down to just one thing—the Beermen lack collective hustle.

"That's the major difference in the series. We are the more experienced team but there are things we need to do that we failed to do the first two games," said Uichico, who skipped the post-game interview Wednesday night after losing Game 2 that gave the Thunder a 2-0 lead in their best-of-seven affair.

"It is the extra effort, those little things like a rebound here and a steal there," Uichico told the INQUIRER. "Unfortunately, Red Bull managed to do those things and that's why they're ahead."

That was very evident in Game 2 when the Beermen lost in all statistical departments except for shooting percentage where they shot 50 percent as against the Thunder's 44-percent clip.

Still, Uichico said there is no problem with the Beermen. "It is just that Red Bull comes on so strong and we tend to lose focus of the endgame."

Though San Miguel was able to solve the match-up problems on its scorers, there was no sense of urgency in its game. The Beermen even wasted an eight-point third-quarter lead (48-40) the same way they lost a 10 point-lead in Game 1.

SMB's Nate Johnson, Danny Ildefonso and Danny Seigle all got the figures expected of them, but Red Bull's handyman Junthy Valenzuela exploded unexpectedly with 25 points, including seven three-pointers.

Meanwhile, Valenzuela's counterpart, Freddie Abuda was particularly timid the past two games. In fact, he didn't see much action at all, making just a total of two points and one rebound in 15 minutes that he played in Games 1 and 2.

While Red Bull coach Yeng Guiao acknowledge the fact that it would be very difficult for SMB to come back, he said they are preparing for a counterstrike from the Grand Slam-seeking defending champions.

"I don't think they fear us because we have a 2-0 advantage," said Guiao. "But what I'm sure of is that we don't fear them (San Miguel).

"We know they are going to come back real strong but we have the momentum and the advantage in this series," added Guiao, who is looking to win his first title in eight years.

SMB's Danny Seigle (left) shouts for help as Red Bull's Junthy Valenzuela drives past him in Game 2 last Wednesday. BEN EBREO

Bombers pound Lions, make it 8-0

By June Navarro

UNBEATEN Jose Rizal University zoomed to its eighth straight victory with a 125-111 rout over San Beda College yesterday in the NCAA basketball tournament at the Rizal Memorial Coliseum.

Ernani Epondulan and Ariel Capus took turns in puncturing the hoops and led seven Bombers in double figures as they started their second round campaign on an auspicious note.

The victory freed the Heavy Bombers from experiencing a similar incident last season where they swept the first round only to lose six of their last nine games, including a twice-to-beat edge in the Final Four.

"It's a good sign but the road to the Finals is still long and windy so we ought to take one game at a time," said JRU coach Boy De Vera in Tagalog.

The slumping Red Lions absorbed their seventh consecutive loss for a regrettable 1-7 record.

The Heavy Bombers illustrated their patience in the second quarter as they gave the Red Lions a doze of their own medicine.

They overwhelmed the Red Lions' vaunted running attack with a fastbreak of their own.

In the other varsity game, defending champion College of St. Benilde snapped a five-game slump with a 72-69 victory over San Sebastian College. The Blazers improved their record to 3-5, while inflicting the Stags' third setback in eight games.

Scores:

JOSE RIZAL 125—Epondulan 22, Capus 20, Te 13, Valenia 13, Dela Rea 12, Tiu 11, Gregorio 10, Santos 8, Fajardo 6, Lazaro 4, Finuliar 4, Jorge 2, Villarin 0, Espiritu 0.

SAN BEDA 111—Cordero 35, Hudencial 19, Bombeo 15, Casio 10, Reroma 10, Manding 7, Erestain 7, Merelos 3, Juco 3, Velasco 0, Weber 0.

Quarters: 23-18, 56-45, 87-71 125-111.

Predicting

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

I ONLY started making my predictions public lately. It was on the advice of some friends and readers. Not that I was afraid to make mistakes. It just wasn't my style.

But then, people change. Things change. We all change. As we love to say, there is only one permanent thing in this world: change.

So change I did. I started predicting. And deciding to go public with every prediction I made. Almost.

I predicted that Al Gore would win in 2000. He lost.

I predicted that Erap would win in 1998. He won.

I predicted that Red Bull would win Game 2. It won. I also predicted, correctly, that Red Bull would win Game 1.

Gut feel makes up 90 percent of how I base each of my predictions; only 10 percent makes up for fact and data.

For example, I felt strongly that Red Bull would win Game 1. Merely a hunch. Fact and data: I thought Red Bull's Devonn Harp would handcuff SMB's Danny Ildefonso and Red Bull's Mick Pennisi would likewise limit SMB's Danny Seigle's point production. Harp and Pennisi are both big. Against big men, I feel Ildefonso and Seigle could not match up that well.

Boy, was I right.

Ildefonso struggled almost all evening; Seigle did not sizzle all night.

I took notice of Game 1's ending: SMB faltered this time in its masterpiece, which was that it always wins a game during an endgame. Red Bull won, 80-78, after outsmarting San Miguel using a mighty rally in the dying seconds of the game. Because of that, I predicted another Red Bull victory in Game 2. I said it would be hard for SMB to recover lost face in that Red Bull would be all over the Beermen like a truck gone wayward. Again, my prediction came out true. Red Bull won, 92-86. I would have lost a Lacoste T-shirt had SMB won Wednesday's Game 2.

Game 3 of the best-of-seven series for the PBA Commissioner's Cup will be played tonight. My prediction? San Miguel Beer.

If I miss, I will lose a bottle of Torres Grand Reserva. If SMB wins, well, Quintin Balajadia will buy me beer. If QB will buy me a San Miguel beer, I'm not sure yet. Maybe Pivo Praha? Budweiser? Gold Eagle? San Mig Light? Heineken? Coors? Miller? Or Pilsner Urquell?

I don't know.

We'll gulp the beer when we get there.

Destiny

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Iñigo

IF MEMORY serves, no team in Philippine Basketball Association history has lost a conference title after taking a 2-0 lead in a best-of-seven series, something which newcomer Batang Red Bull enjoys at present. Only Toyota was able to rewrite the record books by recovering from a 0-2 deficit and beating San Miguel Beer in a championship series way back in the early '80s.

But the question is: Can Batang Red Bull, now nursing a two-game lead over defending champion San Miguel Beer in their PBA Commissioner's Cup, preserve that winning tradition? Yes, Batang Red Bull can, say basketball cognoscenti, adding the odds are stacked in the Thunder's favor. Still, coach Yeng Guiao is too modest to see it that way, saying that Red Bull's 2-0 lead over San Miguel Beer is "only an advantage, not a guarantee."

In this blockbuster series, the Photokina franchise of sportsman-businessman George Chua is bidding to become the first ever rookie team to win a PBA title in only five conference appearances. Also noteworthy is the fact that Red Bull's Davonn Harp, a 6-foot-7 demon in defense, looms large as a worthy challenger to frontrunner Danny Ildefonso of San Miguel in the MVP race, while hardworking Tony Lang, who saw action with Duke University and played for five NA teams in the mid-1990s, is a cinch to win the "Best Import" award. Batang Red Bull is also seeking a grand slam of another kind, a sweep of three sister teams in the PBA, Ginebra, Purefoods and San Miguel Beer and coach Yeng Guiao is gunning for his own version of a grand slam, a third PBA championship after having won two titles for Swift Mighty Meaty in 1992 and 1993.

Destiny.

Negros-San Juan title series gets going

By Roy Luarca

GAME TODAY (USLS Gym)
5 p.m.—Negros vs Andok's San Juan

THE NEGROS Slashers' seeming invincibility at home will be put on the line when they tangle with the Andok's San Juan Knights in Game One of their best-of-five title showdown at 5 p.m. today.

Tremendous crowd support has spurred the Slashers to six straight wins, including a 110-93 conquest of the Knights in the eliminations, at the University of St. La Salle Gym in Bacolod City and tonight's opener should be no exception if everything comes into place.

The Knights, however, are indeed formidable. They survived a sudden death with the Cebuana Lhuillier Gems before trouncing the LBC Batangas Blades, 80-75, Wednesday night and arranging the repeat championship showdown with the Slashers.

The Knights and the Slashers also clashed for last year's national title with the Knights prevailing, 4-2.

This time, the Slashers are primed up for revenge. They swept the Gems, 2-0, in their own semis series and have the luxury of a four-day rest.

The absence of Leo Bat-og, however, may take its toll on the Slashers today. The 6-foot-3 power leaper is serving a one-game suspension, further decimating the Slashers frontline.

Sans Bat-og, 1998 MVP John Ferriols, Reynel Hugnatan, Cid White and Egay Ignacio will have to work double hard underneath to counter the Knights' imposing height advantage. The Knights, with an average height of 6-foot-3 ½, tower over the Slashers, whose average ceiling is 6-foot-2.

Gang rebounding, however, has enabled the Slashers to hold their own off the boards in the elimination round. Their strength really emanates from their array of shooters.

Seven Slashers–led by Dennis Madrid, Jomar Tierra and Patrick Benedicto–can hit from three-point territory, which should force the Knights defenses to extend outward and allow Ferriols and Hugnatan to operate inside.

3 on 3 finals under way

THE NIKE 3 on 3 national finals blast off today at SM Megamall with five provincial teams out to break through Metro Manila's firm grip of the event.

Letran is back to defend its title, unlike San Beda College, back-to-back champs of the first two stagings, which failed to qualify in the Metro Manila eliminations.

UAAP archrivals La Salle and Ateneo are expected to lend color and prestige to the event together with Xavier School, St. Francis of Assisi College and Philippine College of Criminology.

The six Metro Manila teams complete the 11-team cast which includes provincial champions Sacred Heart of Jesus Montessori of Cagayan de Oro, Brokenshire Science High School of Davao City, Colegio de San Agustin of Bacolod, University of Visayas of Cebu and St. Louis High School Philex of Baguio City.

The 11 teams are divided into 2 groups, with each group playing a single round robin. Top 2 teams of each group advance to the crossover knockout semifinals. Winner of the crossover semifinals will compete in the National Finals. Losers from the crossover semifinals will play for 3rd and 4th place.

PGA Championship on

DULUTH, Georgia — Two years behind schedule, the rivalry between Tiger Woods and David Duval has finally come to fruition.

Excuse these guys if they don't get all worked up with excitement.

"They want Tiger to have a rival," Duval said Tuesday, looking ahead to the PGA Championship which begins Thursday (Friday in Manila) at Atlanta Athletic Club.

From Phil Mickelson to Sergio Garcia, Woods has stared down many would-be challengers during his short but brilliant career. In Duval's case, this is the second time around.

In 1999, Duval bumped Woods from No. 1 in the world with the best run of his career, including four victories before the Masters.

Pinay batters shine

KALAMAZOO, Michigan—The MayniLA Golden Girls posted two important victories and finally displayed their potential as title contenders Wednesday in the Girls' Big League softball World Series at the Lee Field of the Vanderberg Park here.

Third basewoman Karina Aribal celebrated her return as a starter by presiding over the Golden Girls' 9-5 thrashing of Victoria of British Colombia in the opening half of their doubleheader.

The pride of Manila Mayor Lito Atienza then followed it up with a 4-3 win over San Antonio of Texas for their fourth victory in six games.

SPORTSWATCH

Pasay 3-cock derby unfolds

ALL roads lead to Pasay City Cockpit tonight when the explosive 3-cock derby starts at 7 p.m. with more than 50 exciting fights on tap. At stake in this event, hosted by partners Dondon and Gerry Maningas (PCC sentenciador), is a whopping cash prize of P150,000. Entry fee is P5,500. All official entries must be submitted today, not later than 2 p.m. at the PCC office. For inquiries, please contact 843-1746, 843-1890 and 816-6750. According to pit managers Oscar Gonzales, Eric dela Rosa and Butchoy Olano, regular hackfights are also held at PCC every Sunday, Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday.

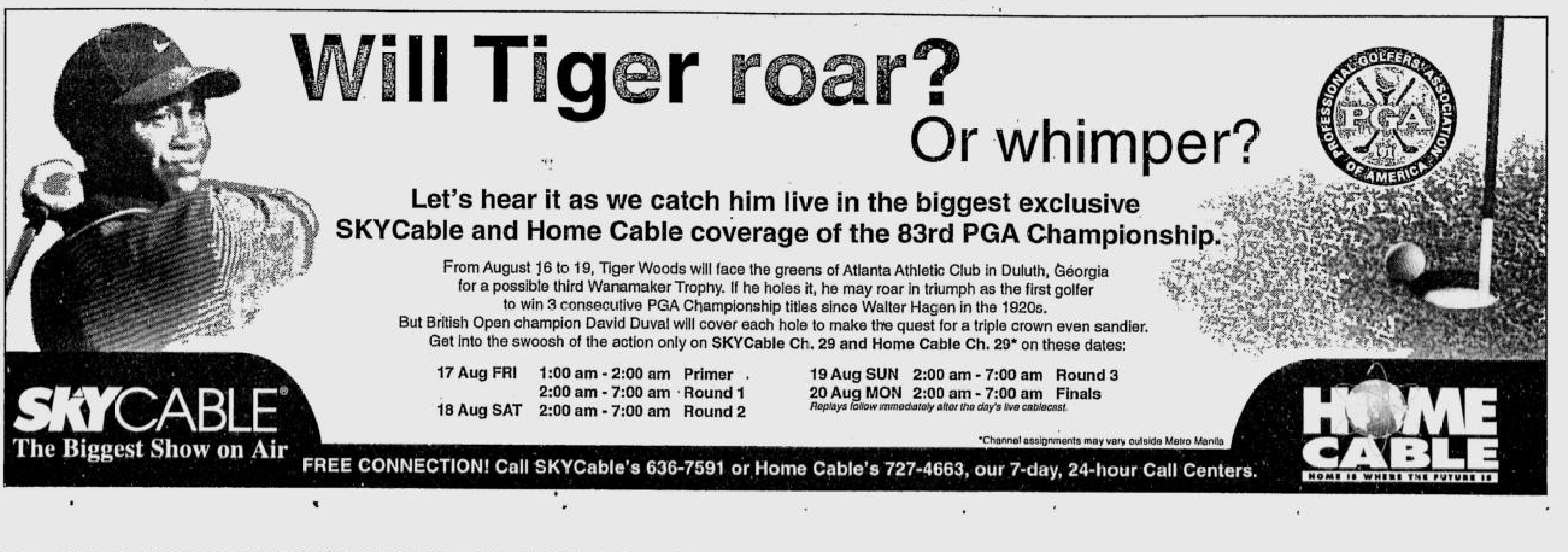
Beta Epsilon holds golfest

ON THE occasion of its 72nd anniversary, Beta Epsilon of the UP College of Engineering will hold an invitational golf tournament. Entitled "The Purple Tree," the event is slated today at the Executive Course of Valley Golf Club in Antipolo, Rizal. Tee off time is 7 a.m., followed by an awards luncheon and raffle. For inquiries and ticket reservations, contact Joel at (0918) 53203142 or Maritess at 807-5429.

RACING TIPS

AT SAN LAZARO By Mr. 999

Race 1—1. Golden Quest 2. Wire to Wire 3. Speed Empire 4. Labuyo
Race 2—1. Kay Rufina 2. El Duque 3. Top Quest 4. Regimental Lass
Race 3—1. Lorna 2. Premiere Stock 3. Summer Dreams 4. Big Kahuna
Race 4—1. Boogie Shoes 2. Rose and Toy 3. Classic Star 4. Dominant Dancer 5. Wild Rose
Race 5—1. Full Blast/Privately Owned 2. Sweet Justice 3. Earth Angel 4. Sunny View
Race 6—1. Hong Kong Treasure 2. Portal Dancer 3. Baby Maxxine 4. Batang Pier 5. Pretty Pleasing
Race 7—1. Reverie 2. Summit Power 3. Ultimate Prize
Race 8—1. Rainbow Dazzler 2. Snake Dancer 3. Commandments 4. Trigerman 5. King Aldrin 6. Agarra Pinche



Will Tiger roar?
Or whimper?

Let's hear it as we catch him live in the biggest exclusive SKYCable and Home Cable coverage of the 83rd PGA Championship.

From August 16 to 19, Tiger Woods will face the greens of Atlanta Athletic Club in Duluth, Georgia for a possible third Wanamaker Trophy. If he holes it, he may roar in triumph as the first golfer to win 3 consecutive PGA Championship titles since Walter Hagen in the 1920s.
But British Open champion David Duval will cover each hole to make the quest for a triple crown even sandier.
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18 Aug SAT 2:00 am - 7:00 am Round 2
19 Aug SUN 2:00 am - 7:00 am Round 3
20 Aug MON 2:00 am - 7:00 am Finals
Replays follow immediately after the day's live cablecast.

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The Ever Gotesco branch is located along Don Mariano Avenue corner Don Antonio Road in Quezon City. See you all there!

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Bobby Parks loses valuables

BAGUIO CITY—Seven-time Philippine Basketball Association's best import awardee Bobby Parks lost his travelling bag, cash, car stereo and other accessories to thieves on Abanao Road here Monday night. Off-duty PO2 Benedict Gangaoen was on his way home when Parks approached him and reported the incident. Parks was in Baguio for the PBAL Athletes Haven's Cup. *Jovelyn Reyes, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

PBA, MBA and PBL offer 'Super Squad' for Games

BERNARDINO

PLAYERS from the Philippine Basketball Association, Metropolitan Basketball Association and Philippine Basketball League will form the national team to the Southeast Asian Games next month in Kuala Lumpur.

This materialized yesterday after officials of the three groups met to discuss the formation of a "Super Squad" to defend the crown in the Malaysian capital Sept. 8-17.

Present in the meeting were PBA Commissioner Jun Bernardino, MBA Commissioner Ogie Narvasa and PBA deputy commissioner Tommy Ong representing Chino Trinidad, who was in Baguio.

The three looked "for the best option available" in the country's bid to assure the basketball gold in Kuala Lumpur. They also urged Lito Puyat and Tiny Literal, who are contesting the presidency of the Basketball Association of the Philippines, to unite.

"While we are waiting for a solution to this so-called BAP mess, we deemed it best to offer this option to the Philippine Olympic Committee," Bernardino said. "We will turn over to the POC the team that would be formed for the SEA Games."

Because of the unresolved dispute, the BAP was suspended by the International Basketball Federation (Fiba), jeopardizing the country's chances to defend its basketball crown in Kuala Lumpur.

Already, the Philippines was scratched from the recent ABC championships, which the country last won in 1986 in Taipei after its victory in Manila in 1973.

Over lunch at the Schwarzewalder restaurant in Makati, Bernardino, Narvasa and Ong also reiterated their commitment to form a "basketball superbody" that will oversee the operations of the country's basketball affairs.

The BAP earned Fiba's ire after Literal filed a court case against Puyat and the POC, an action the Fiba deemed as "inviting external intervention."

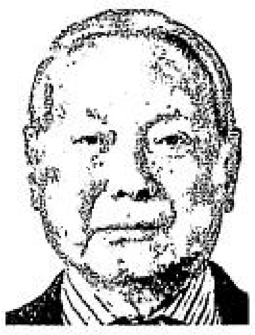
Puyat has long agreed to a Fiba-inspired arbitration of the case but not Literal. Literal has reconsidered some days back, a move that somehow revived the country's flickering hopes of making it to the basketball competition in Kuala Lumpur.

Narvasa said the MBA will not back down from supporting the proposed "Super Squad."

"We are behind it, 101 percent. We have agreed with the other major leagues to support it—and all-out—financially or in whatever form," Narvasa said.

Ong said the PBL has "never wavered in its commitment for the flag. But as we strive to offer whatever could be best for the country, we also urge Lito and Tiny to unite and find a common solution to the BAP leadership question."

Rustan's supports pingpong


TANTOCO

TO CAP Rustan's Group of Companies 50th Anniversary Celebration, the nation's retailing conglomerate will sponsor the National Table Tennis Championships on Dec. 5-10.

With its chair, the Hon. Ambassador Bienvenido R. Tantoco Sr. at the helm of things, the Rustan's group aims to promote the sport nationwide and produce top caliber table tennis athletes who can represent our country in international competitions.

Rustan's Group of Companies hopes to make the sport, also known as pingpong, equal in popularity with basketball and billiards.

The tournament will be held in two venues. The elimination rounds on Dec. 5-8 are set at the Ninoy Aquino Sports Complex in Manila while the semifinals and championships are scheduled at Makati's Glorietta Activity Center on Dec. 9-10.

All events will be played from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

This 9-event competition is open to all and is under the program of the Table Tennis Association of the Philippines under its president, Rufino Go, and Sports Director, Victor U. Valbuena.

For more details, call Marie Grace Caranyagan at 815-2771.

Off-Road Challenge in Davao

CALTEX Delo brings its off-road competition in Davao where some 60 off-roaders coming from all over the country will see action on a closed-circuit track at the Ma-a riverside Aug. 17 to 19. Dubbed the 1st KadayawanOff-Road Challenge of Davao, the event is one of the major highlights of the much-celebrated Kadayawan Festival in Davao.

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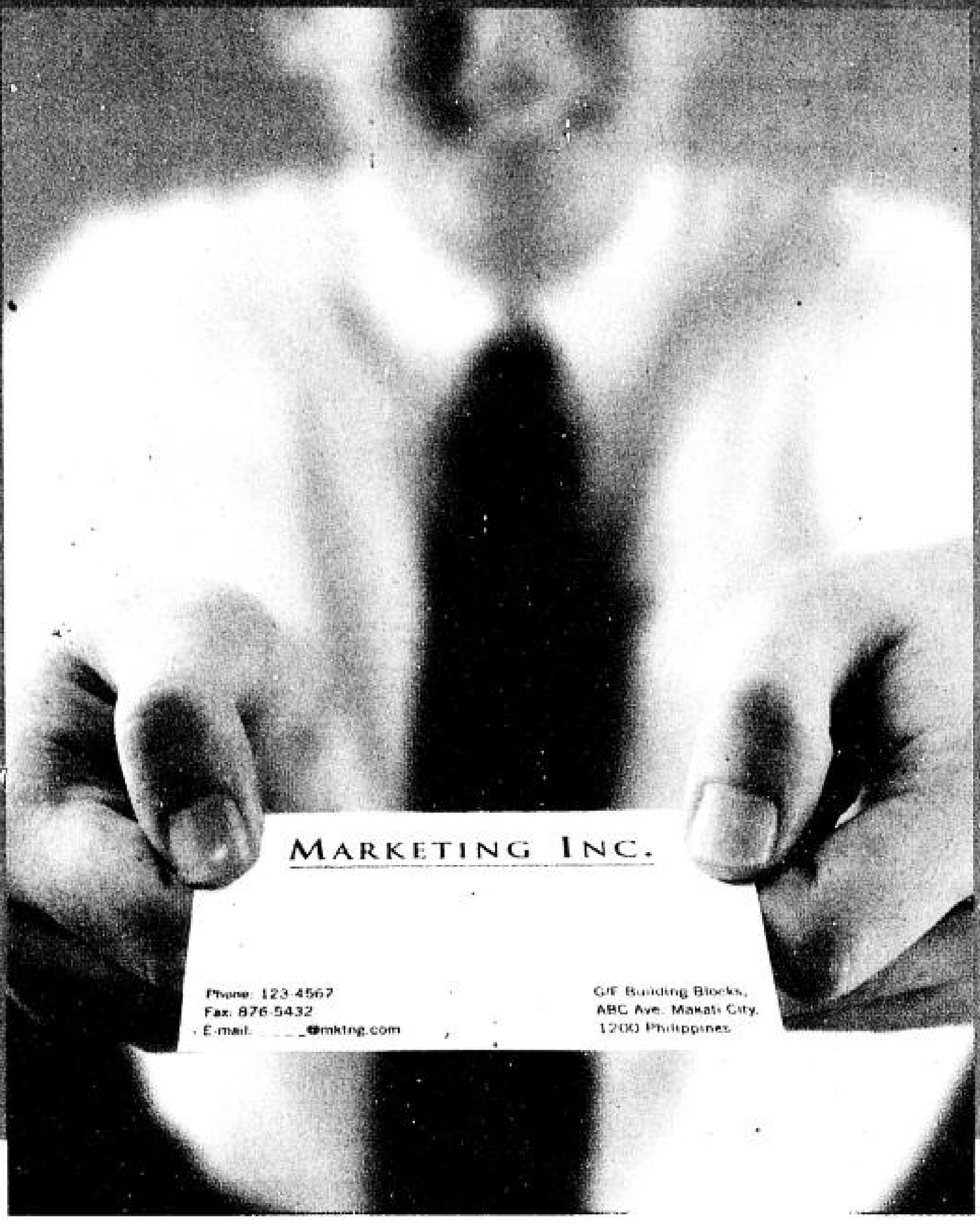

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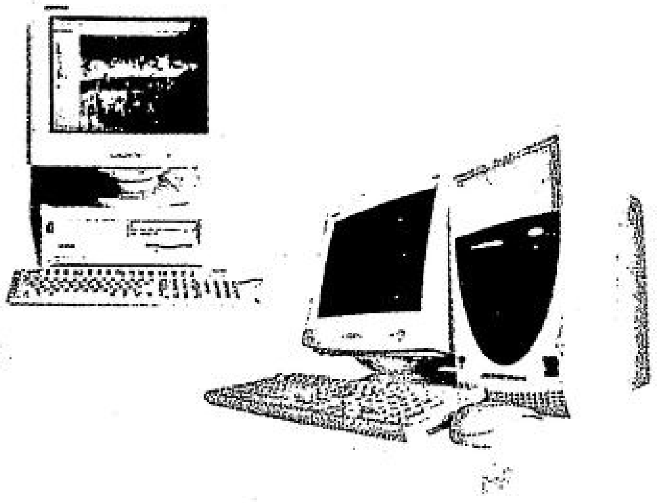

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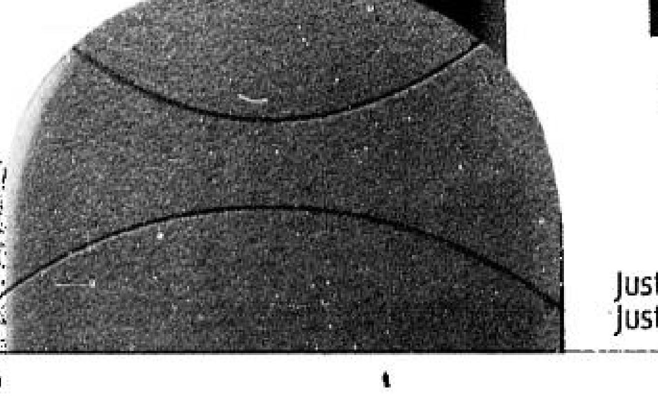

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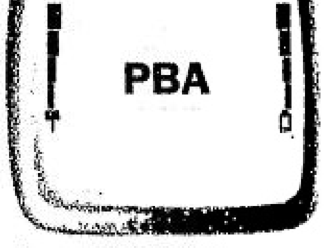

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METRO

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Mathay fast-tracked lending of P1-B land to Opus Dei school, say dads

MOA may be revoked

BY ANDREA TRINIDAD-ECHAVEZ

FORMER Mayor Ismael Mathay Jr. allegedly fast-tracked the passage of a resolution that allowed a private school to use for free a P1-billion lot owned by the city government.

At least four reelectionist councilors yesterday admitted they have not read any document pertaining to the allotment of a 3.1 hectare city-owned lot in Greenmeadows for the Paref-Northfield School for boys.

In what appears to be a complete turnaround, majority of the reelectionists signified willingness to support the bid to scrap the allegedly anomalous transaction and revoke the memorandum of agreement (MOA) signed with the Opus Dei school.

Even the former mayor himself yesterday expressed support for the call to have the agreement revoked.

Denying allegations that he influenced the council to railroad the resolution, Mathay called on the city council to "reopen" the case and conduct new hearings to hear both sides.

"No damage has been done yet so I suggest that the council call both parties and conduct public hearings again," Mathay told the INQUIRER in a phone interview.

He said that with the controversy, it could be best to revoke the MOA to put the issue to rest.

"This has been done in the past (revoke of MOA)," he said. "So there's no reason that it can't be done now." He said that since no structure had been erected in the lot yet and the city government had not issued any permit, it would be easy to end the controversy.

Even Councilor Ariel Inton expressed optimism that those opposed to the "anomalous deal" could muster enough support in the council.

"We have the number," the councilor said in a phone interview. "But whether or not it is enough to have the deal scrapped remains to be seen. We are quite confident though."

MATHAY/A24

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THE gang-rape suspects, including three minors, were charged at the Pasig prosecutor's office. DENNIS SABANGAN

5-year-old shot dead by playmate

AN 11-YEAR-OLD boy on Wednesday accidentally shot dead his 5-year-old male cousin while they were playing with an air rifle in Valenzuela City. The 5-year-old died while being brought to the Polo Emergency Hospital, police said.

The 5-year-old and his cousin were playing in their house in Balangkas, Valenzuela about 1:30 p.m. when the older boy took his father's air rifle, investigation showed.

While the 11-year-old was inspecting the gun, it suddenly went off. The pellet entered the 5-year-old's right shoulder and exited in the back, police said. After the shooting, the 11-year-old ran to his mother.

The victim's parents reportedly decided not to file charges against the 11-year-old. *Christian V. Esguerra*

6 young men accused of raping 18-year-old

BY AGNES E. DONATO

A TEENAGE girl accused three men and three teenage boys of raping her after a drinking spree in Pasig City.

Ruel Arguelles, 21 and Marvin Adiova, 20, both of Nagpayong, Barangay Pinagbuhatan in Pasig, and Rodel Sarmiento, 21, were charged with rape before the Pasig City prosecutor's office.

Two 17-year-old boys and a 16-year-old boy were also charged with rape.

In her sworn statement, the 18-year-old victim said she and a female cousin had a drinking session at the house of one of the suspects in Pasig City about 8 p.m. on Tuesday.

She said the six young men and three other girls were already drunk when she and her cousin arrived.

She said that hours later, the guests started to leave one after the other, until only she and two of the young men were left.

Seeing that she was already drunk and weakened by alcohol, the two young men brought her to an abandoned house where Sarmiento raped her twice, including once in front of his friends, she said.

The others then took turns in raping the girl, who said she was too weak and dizzy to scream for help.

She said she was able to call for help only when the suspects had already left the house.

The girl said she then related the assaults to barangay watchmen who apprehended the suspects.

Police said the suspects are now detained at the Pasig City police station.

Arab dies in hotel

BY JEROME ANING

A SAUDI Arabian businessman died while he was in the company of his girlfriend in a hotel room in Ermita, Manila early Wednesday evening, police said yesterday.

Rabi al-Nahdi, 55, was already dead in bed in Room 46 of Frendy Hotel at 1548 A. Mabini St. by the time his girlfriend Rhadia Galang was able to call for help around 6 p.m. Wednesday.

SPO3 Alredo Salazar, quoting hotel resident manager Melinda Yuga, said Rhadia and the Arab were in the room when the foreigner began coughing violently.

Rhadia told Yuga that Al-Nahdi went to the comfort room while she left the room to call for help.

Rhadia, accompanied by security guard Reynaldo Dordos, went back to the room and found Al-Nahdi already dead in bed and clad only in a gray underwear.

ARAB DIES/ A24

Aussie falls prey to 'Ativan Gang'

BY ALCUIN PAPA

AN AUSTRALIAN businessman lost about P100,000 to suspected members of an "Ativan Gang" Wednesday in Makati City.

Allen Smith, married and a resident of Barangay Bel-Air, Makati, told police that two men robbed him of jewelry and about P60,000 and US$400 in cash.

He told police that he was waiting for a taxi near his residence when two men in "decent clothes" approached him. He said they befriended him and managed to convince him to invest in a business venture.

They invited him to have lunch with them in an undisclosed house to discuss their proposal, he said. While one of them prepared snacks and orange juice, the other man discussed the venture with Smith, the Australian said.

He said he became dizzy and blacked out after he drank the juice. He woke up around two hours later and discovered he had been robbed, he said.

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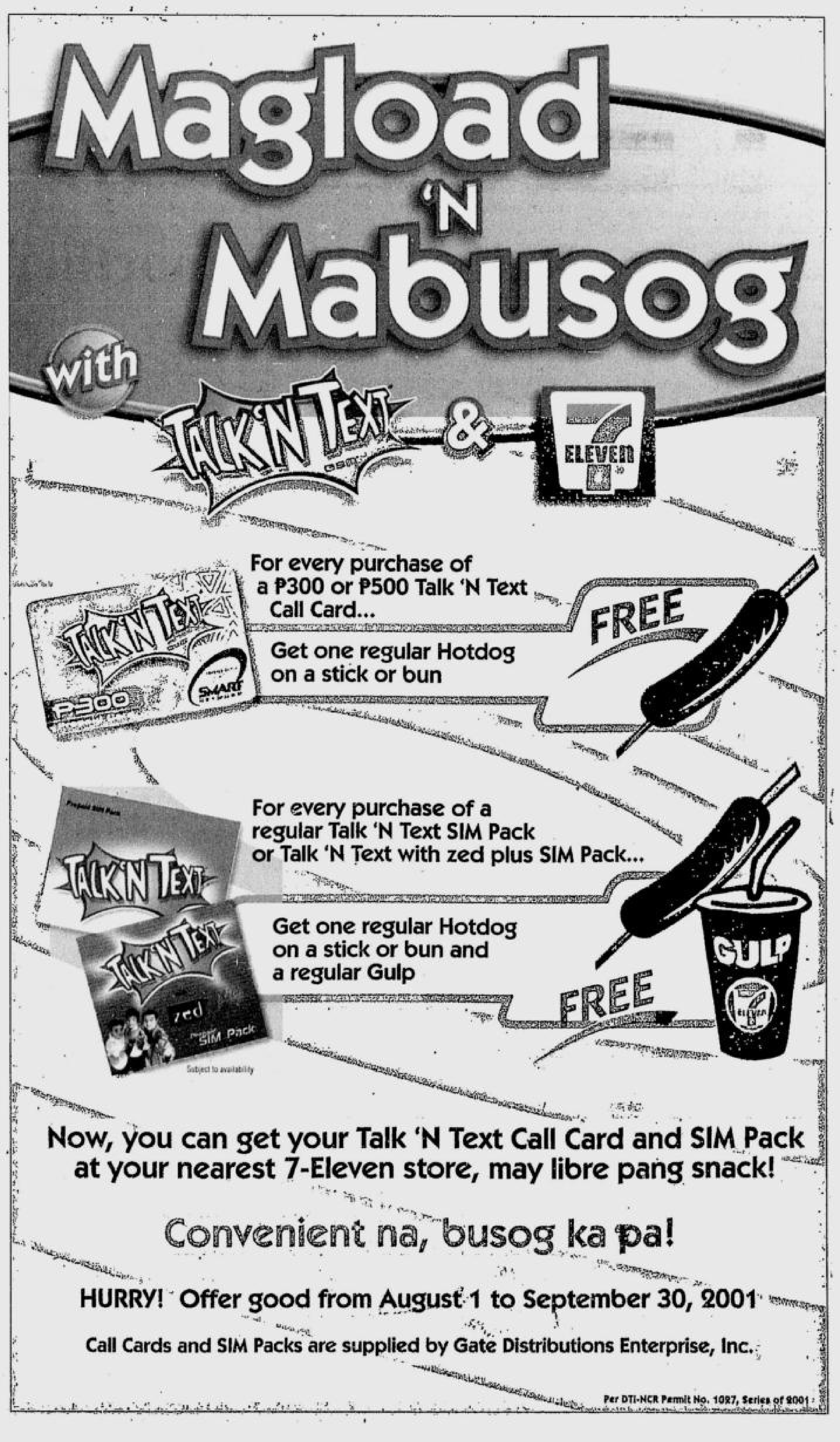

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Death of Indian detainee probed

By Alcuin Papa

BUREAU of Immigration officials yesterday said they are investigating the death of an Indian inmate at the bureau's detention center in Taguig after the 104 foreigners being held there went on hunger strike to protest the lack of medical attention in the facility.

Immigration Associate Commissioner Daniel Cueto yesterday said he ordered the investigation shortly after Indian Satnam Singh died reportedly of heart complications last week.

After Singh's death, the detainees went on a hunger strike to protest the lack of medical attention, violation of their rights to bail, their allegedly illegal arrest and detention, extortion and other corrupt practices of immigration officials, and the officials' abuse of discretionary powers in dealing with the detainees' cases.

But Cueto said a committee had already been formed to review and expedite the cases of the foreigners.

He also debunked allegations that the detainees were being kept against their will, instead of being freed on bail or deported to their country of origin.

Cueto added that the BI could not deport the alien detainees or grant their petition for bail because they have pending cases in court. If they were deported, the BI could be charged with obstruction of justice.

"No less than the Supreme Court has upheld several times our discretionary power to detain or grant bail to aliens charged with violating our immigration laws," Cueto said.

But Canadian Raymond Jackson, acting spokesman for the detainees, said immigration officials have been abusing the discretionary power vested on the bureau.

"They have been abusing that power routinely and detainees here know that," Jackson said. "Some of us have been falsely accused and detained. If we want to go free on bail, we have to give in to the extortion demands of BI officials."

Jackson has been accused of estafa and passport tampering.

The Canadian said immigration officials should instead focus their investigation on bureau personnel engaging in corrupt activities.

"We are being made cash cows here," he said. "The truth is, we hardly have any money left."

He said they have been told again and again that their cases are on review, "but nothing is happening and our cases are not moving at all" because some of the detainees could not come up with the money demanded by immigration officials.

NATIVE SONS

An Igorot dramatizes his minority group's struggle against the government's mining and dam projects on their land, during a rally on Don Chino Roces Bridge near Malacañang. Other members of the Katutubong Mamamayan ng Pilipinas (KMP) burn an effigy in the rally that coincides with National Minority Week.

BEN MOSES EBREO, TOOTS SOBERANO

I did not endorse any waste management system—Abalos

By Nelson F. Flores

METROPOLITAN Manila Development Authority Chair Benjamin Abalos Sr. yesterday denied he has endorsed to Malacañang a German company for the MMDA's solid waste management program.

Abalos made the denial after he learned that Pro Environment Consortium (PEC) claimed that he had endorsed the firm and its technology to Malacañang.

PEC is one of the firms seeking the contract for the operation and control of the MMDA's solid waste management program.

Abalos said that problems, including the legal technicalities involved in the awarding of the contract for solid waste management program, have yet to be resolved.

According to a published newspaper report, Abalos endorsed to Malacañang a German technology on waste management as proposed by PEC due to its alleged financial feasibility and cost effectiveness.

The MMDA is constantly hampered by numerous legal constraints due to the failure of its former administrators to find acceptable means of settling the garbage problem of the metropolis.

Earlier, Australian firm Jancom International Development Projects Pty. Ltd. (JIDP) threatened to sue the Philippine government before the International Chambers of Commerce in London, England if the MMDA awarded the garbage contract to another firm.

Abalos has denied awarding the garbage contract to any international or local firm.

He said a number of local governments in the Bicol region have expressed interest in providing a dump site for Metro Manila's waste.

He said this would generate income for the region and would revitalize the Philippine National Railway, which would be used to transport the garbage.

Drilon to grace Kilosbayan anniversary

SENATE President Franklin M. Drilon will engage Kilosbayan members and guests in a lively discussion of "The Direction and Thrust of the First Senate after Edsa II" at the Kilosbayan 8th anniversary forum today, Kilosbayan president Jovito R. Salonga announced yesterday.

A panel of three Kilosbayan leaders, headed by Ambassador Sedfrey A. Ordoñez, will ask questions on the topic during the open forum following Drilon's speech.

The forum will be held at 2 p.m. on the 3rd floor of the Shalom Center, 1660 Leon Ma. Guerrero St., (beside St. Paul College) Malate, Manila. Parking space is available at 1667 Vasquez St., across Ellinwood Church.

Kiko confirms break-in at Wack-Wack home

By Armand N. Nocum

NEOPHYTE Sen. Francis "Kiko" Pangilinan yesterday confirmed reports that there was a break-in in his residence in Wack-Wack, Mandaluyong on Aug. 6.

"I confirm a report that an unidentified man broke into our home in Wack-Wack ... while I was in Washington D.C. on official Senate business," he said in a statement.

He said the "intruder fled the scene when he realized his presence had been detected."

"None of the members of my family nor my household were harmed, thank God," Pangilinan added. "Neither was there any loss or damage to property."

He said he has asked the National Bureau of Investigation to investigate the break-in.

Pangilinan is the husband of movie, television and recording "megastar" Sharon Cuneta.

Rains leave 34 northern barangays under water

By Christian V. Esguerra

INTERMITTENT rains beginning Wednesday night flooded at least 34 barangays in northern Manila, where hundreds of people were stranded and traffic ground to a standstill for at least six hours yesterday morning.

No casualties were reported.

The heavily polluted Tullahan River overflowed about 6 a.m. yesterday and water rose nearly four feet deep at the bridge connecting Malabon and Valenzuela.

Vehicles coming from Valenzuela could not pass through the city's flooded Marulas area until four hours later.

Hundreds of commuters, mostly Manila-bound students, had to ride makeshift boats made of plywood and styrofoam to get to the Malabon side of the Tullahan bridge. Each passenger was charged P20.

Traffic was also heavy on Valenzuela's secondary roads, particularly Karuhatan and Gen. T. de Leon all the way to Tandang Sora Extension.

Commuters had to take detours, which congested traffic in other areas, particularly at the Balintawak exit of the North Luzon Expressway, said Orly Lanuza of the Philippine National Construction Corp.

All 23 barangays in Valenzuela's first district were under knee-deep floodwater, police said.

In Malabon, at least eight major roads connecting nine barangays were not accessible to light vehicles yesterday morning due to knee-deep floodwater. The flooded barangays were Longos, Tonsuya, Maysilo, Santolan, Panghulo, Potrero, Catmon, Tinajeros, and Ibaba.

Arab dies in hotel

(From page A23)

Yuga told SPO3 Salazar that Al-Nahdi had been checking into the same hotel room since Aug. 10, and that Rhadia had been his constant companion.

Hotel employees called the police at the nearby community precinct on Sta. Monica Street. Rhadia left without making a written statement about what happened.

The victim's body, according to SPO3 Salazar, bore no external injuries. He theorized that the Arab died of natural causes. The case, however, was still entered in police records as "death under inquiry."

The body was brought to the Tres Amigos Funeral Homes in Paco. The Western Police District has informed the Saudi Arabian Embassy about the death.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Friday, August 17, 2001
19th Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: Jos 24:1-13
Gospel: Mt 19:3-12

Some Pharisees approached Jesus. They wanted to test him and asked, "Is a man allowed to divorce his wife for any reason he wants?"

Jesus replied, "Have you not read that in the beginning the Creator *made them male and female*, and he said: *Man has now to leave father and mother, and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one body?* So they are no longer two but one body; let no one separate what God has joined."

They asked him, "Then, why did Moses command us to write a bill of dismissal in order to divorce?" Jesus replied, "Moses knew your stubborn heart, so he allowed you to divorce your wives, but it was not so in the beginning. Therefore I say to you: whoever divorces his wife, unless it be for infidelity, and marries another, commits adultery."

The disciples said, "If that is the condition of a married man, it is better not to marry." Jesus said to them, "Not everybody can accept what you have just said, but only those who have received this gift. Some are born incapable of marriage. Some have been made that way by others. But there are some who have given up the possibility of marriage for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. Let the one who can accept it, accept it."

Commentary:

Both married life and voluntary celibacy are valid options for the sake of the kingdom. Both are integral parts of the divine plan and are not to be invalidated, unless in very special cases. Jesus is strict on this point to protect the human person against his or her own tendency to insensitivity and superficiality. New in this reading is the explanation that voluntary celibacy for the sake of the kingdom is not merely a human option but is a gift of God given to selected people. In both cases people are invited to participate in God's plan. Both are equally holy and not to be violated. Also here Jesus brings the interpretation of the law to perfection.

We thank you Father for having chosen us to be part of your plan of salvation. Grant that we may be faithful to what you established.

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SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

MERCANTILE LAW/CIVIL LAW (OBLIGATIONS AND CONTRACTS—Receipts and contracts—The Court is not unaware of the slipshod manner of preparing receipts, order slips and invoices, which unfortunately has become a common business practice of traders and businessmen. In most cases, these commercial forms are not always fully accomplished to contain all the necessary information describing the whole business transaction. The sales clerks merely indicate a description and the price of each item sold without bothering to fill up all the available spaces in the particular receipt or invoice, and without proper regard for any legal repercussion for such neglect. Certainly, it would not hurt if businessmen and traders would strive to make the receipts and invoices they issue compete, as far as practicable, in material particulars. These documents are not mere scraps of paper bereft of probative value but vital pieces of evidence of commercial transactions. They are written memorials of the details of the consummation of contracts. [Citations omitted.] [Justice Bellosillo, Second Division, Lagon v. Hooven Comalco Industries, Inc., G.R. No. 135657, January 17, 2001]

Digest by R.B. Vera

San Miguel needs a poor man's suit

BARE EYE

Recah Trinidad

NOW, after having gone two up in the championship series, nobody can accuse coach Yeng Guiao of failing to sound a warning.

San Miguel diehards did gripe, claiming the Game One upset scored by Batang Red Bull over the favored Beermen was a fluke—or, more acidly, referee-aided, singling out that non-call after a desperation baseline drive by Danny Seigle sent him down hard on the floor following a clash of bodies.

Well, after the Wednesday big bang which sent underdog Red Bull just two wins within snaring the PBA Commissioner's Cup, Guiao should be thumping his chest. He should be snorting and yelling "Didn't I tell you so?"

No, he did not tell anybody. But, after Wednesday, the truth is out. The Red Bull Thunder, mark this, are out not only to spring an ambush.

They are out to dominate.

***

And they did exactly that.

Game Two bared Red Bull was better coached, better trained, more determined and superbly organized.

Given only a slim chance at the start, they suddenly appeared ready and raring to finish off their rivals, the shorter the route the better.

San Miguel? Well, you need not be an expert to note that there have been serious leaks in its fabled championship engine.

OK. San Miguel has had several successful championship test drives before this monumental race with Red Bull. It had sputtered, recovered, and went on to finish conveniently ahead of the pack.

In fact, the Beermen had appeared sure of a Game One win on Sunday. Until Red Bull flashed a thunderbolt finish that, blammm, turned everything in its favor.

Noted analysts hereabouts predictably came up with contrasting opinions on how Red Bull did it in the best-of-7 opener.

One pundit credited everything to Tony Lang, easily the most dominant import in the Commissioner's Conference.

Another sharp basketball mind zeroed in on coach Guiao's style and credited the big win to his daring experimentation.

***

There were, however, no long debates on Wednesday.

All those who know enough about the game were united in their assessment of Game Two: San Miguel could not, as a whole, cope with the scalding match-ups.

There were serious mismatches on the floor which the Beermen could not, try as they did, promptly patch up.

Guiao, of course, had the luxury of over-emphasizing Lang's sharpness and superiority.

Guiao was also able to throw in an unpredictable but unforgiving gunner, Junthy Valenzuela who, from the way he was defended, must've been an unknown entity to the opposing tactician.

San Miguel tried but failed to recover from the apparent ignorance. Worse, after Valenzuela had made successive triples, he was caught in a crucial eyeball-to-eyeball sideline lock-up with Danny Seigle.

And, to typify helplessness, Seigle blinked and gave Valenzuela a freeway for a crucial drive that definitely broke the hearts of San Mig diehards.

***

You see, the popular bet was that San Miguel, no stranger to dropping big series openers, would equalize last Wednesday.

Why? Because the Game One upset was supposed to have been a wake-up call.

It was therefore a complete surprise that San Miguel played sort of sleepy and lost Game Two by half a dozen points.

It appeared as though San Miguel had, at times, one or two men less. Or, to put it more aptly, the Beermen were often behind by a lazy step on the floor.

The San Miguel coaching staff has to cram to check this glaring inferiority.

But the task, needless to say, will not be easy. Because, in order to cope again, and hopefully even up, San Miguel needs to resort to something drastic. It will have to assume a new role in the series.

San Miguel, the overwhelming crowd favorite, must play as underdog—without, of course, playing poorly.

Will the tattered poor man's suit fit?

It's not easy changing lifestyles overnight. But San Miguel, bursting with gladness and a string of glittering titles, has no choice.

Anyway, if it's any consolation, coach Guiao did offer a piece of compliment to the loser on Wednesday. He said they had had problems with San Miguel in the first half.

But, then, in the second half, Guiao claimed, luck smiled and they were able to make the proper adjustments.

Nice line. Luck. Coach Jong Uichico would be silly to buy that.

Mathay fast-tracked lending of P1-B . . .

(From page A23)

He said most of the reelectionist councilors have already signified their intention to support the move to revoke the MOA upon learning that it meant a billion-peso loss for the city government.

Mathay and the previous city council gave the 3.1-hectare lot donated by real estate developer Ortigas and Co. to Paref-Northfield rent-free for the next 50 years.

In exchange, the school would give 200 scholarships yearly to indigent students recommended by the city government.

However, when the agreement expires, the city government is required to pay the school 25 percent of the property's assessed value. Otherwise, the school would take control of the property for another 50 years.

Residents protested against the agreement and threatened to file a graft case against Mathay and the previous council for the alleged anomaly.

Crossover one of few producers who risk spending millions

SHOWBIZ TIDBITS

Leah Salterio

LAST year, when Crossover 105.1 vowed to do bigger things for 2001, the people behind the radio network were undoubtedly serious about it. And Crossover didn't disappoint its loyal listeners. Aside from being one of the most popular FM stations, Crossover has become a major force to reckon with in concert productions.

Since it produced **Martin Nievera**'s phenomenal "XVII" concert series in 1999, Crossover has continued to mount sold-out shows not just in Manila, but also in the provinces. Hence, the Crossover team has proven that running a radio network is not its only expertise.

Bringing the concerts out of town was Crossover's effort to reach out to its provincial audiences. It was hard work on the part of the Crossover team, but with the overwhelming reception that the shows received, the results were very gratifying.

Jaya was the next artist who headlined a "Crossover Live Tour" which covered Bacolod, Baguio, Cebu and a major concert also at the Ultra.

Then came the intimate series for "Crossover Presents," held monthly at Captain's Bar of Mandarin Oriental Manila. To date, artists such as **Regine Velasquez, Jaya, Janno Gibbs, Lani Misalucha** and **Joey Generoso** of Side A Band have been featured.

Naturally, a large part of the success of the shows was anchored on the popularity of the artists. But Crossover certainly knows how to hype its productions. It helps that the station can constantly promote the shows on air, both in Manila and the provinces. In fact, some shows were sold out one week before the performance dates.

Crossover started year 2001 by bringing back Martin in another concert series, "XV3-The Crossover Live Tour." There were performances in Davao, Cebu and Bacolod, culminating in Martin's birthday concert at the Ultra.

Now, it's the turn of Lani Misalucha to star in a Crossover series. The radio network kicked off Lani's Crossover tour in Cebu early this month, and will mount her major concert at the Araneta Coliseum on Sept. 8. Crossover will also bring Lani to Baguio, Bacolod and Davao.

Behind the quality shows of Crossover are the Villar siblings, led by eldest child **Louie** who conceptualized the concert series and the program format of the radio station.

By this time, most everyone knows Crossover was born after the Villars decided to give up the recording business and concentrate on broadcast operations.

The Crossover tour is apparently a response to the competitive pressure. The radio network offers concerts with first-rate singers and quality productions, both in Manila and the provinces.

The Villars said they don't want to shortchange their provincial listeners, so they bring them the same concert witnessed by the Manila audiences. The Crossover team goes the extra mile by shipping to the provinces all the necessary technical equipment in a 30-foot container, to be assured of a topnotch production.

Lately, very few concert producers want to risk millions in mounting big shows. Among the active ones are Viva Entertainment, Maxi-Media International and Crossover.

Crossover's live concerts, in turn, boost the ratings of the radio network, which ranks among the Top 10 stations in Manila.

But Crossover did not confine its reach to the Philippines alone. Last year, the station pioneered a risky and ambitious project by going global and broadcasting its radio signal on the Internet.

The Villars said they wanted to go online not only to keep up with digital media revolution, but also to serve the Filipino contract workers abroad.

Today, the signal of Manila-based Crossover is clearly heard on the web by logging on to www.crossover.com.ph.

By clicking the "on air" icon, Filipinos abroad can listen to the same rhythm and blues, jazz and ballad selection being played in Manila.

Lea sings movie themes

EVEN if **Lea Salonga** is in New York, she remains "visible" in the local scene. We see her photos splashed in the fashion magazines and her huge billboards in Metro Manila, as image model of Bayo.

We are constantly updated about her career opportunities in the United States. She joined the cast of the soap series "As the World Turns" and she will headline the musical, "The Flower Drum Song," in Los Angeles in October.

In the recording scene, Lea is not to be outdone. She recently came out with a new CD, "Songs from the Screen," the live recording of her two-night concert last year with the Manila Philharmonic Orchestra (MPO).

Lea's choices of tunes for the concert are truly impressive. Credit should also go to her younger brother, Berklee College of Music *summa cum laude* **Gerard Salonga**, who was the show's musical director and arranger.

As the title suggests, the album contains the most memorable movie themes. The album opens with MPO's seven-minute instrumental tribute to composer **Henry Mancini**, then segues to Lea's stirring vocal performance of "Can You Read My Mind," the theme from "Superman."

Lea also renders "Looking Through the Eyes of Love," from the **Robby Benson-Lynn Holly Johnson** romantic drama, "Ice Castles;" "It Might Be You," from the **Dustin Hoffman** starrer, "Tootsie;" and "Somewhere Over the Rainbow" from "The Wizard of Oz."

She sings a Disney medley led by her original recording of "Reflection" from "Mulan," plus other themes like "Colors of the Wind" from "Pocahontas," "Go the Distance" from "Hercules" and "You'll Be in My Heart" from "Tarzan."

Other ballads in the selection are "What Matters Most" and "Our Love is Here to Stay."

Lea goes OPM by dishing out the **Louie Ocampo-George Canseco** composition, "Ikaw," from the **Sharon Cuneta-Ariel Rivera** movie of the same title.

We were delighted to find out that Lea recorded her own version of Sharon's "Sana'y Maghintay ang Walang Hanggan," which is a beautiful Tagalog ballad.

Lea sang other OPM ditties like "Kahit Na," "Mahawi Man ang Ulap," "Ikaw Lang ang Mamahalin," "Ikaw Lamang" and "Bituing Walang Ningning."

The CD is released by BMG Records Pilipinas, Lea's recording label for the past five years.

SALONGA. Her latest CD is "Songs from the Screen."

DANCE CONCERT

The country's premiere dance group, Douglas Nierras' Powerdance, marks its 13th anniversary with a two-night dance concert, "Turn Up the Quiet . . . Just Dance," Aug. 25 gala show at 8 p.m. and Aug. 26 matinee show at 5 p.m., at the CCP Main Theater (Tanghalang Nicanor Abelardo). The dance concert will feature an all-new repertoire of Philippine contemporary dance pieces, choreographed by Nierras. The show will include the milestone piece, "Gabaq-an," which is a collaborative work of Nierras with the Bayanihan, Madrigals and Powerdance. For ticket inquiries, call 633-6417.

DYE VEST IN DAVAO

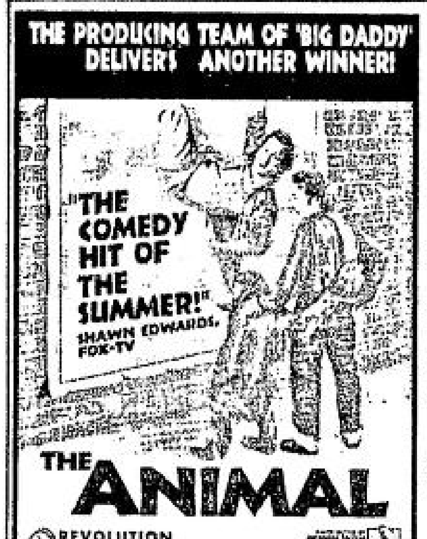
Dye Vest performs in a special concert for Davao's Kadayawan Festival, tomorrow night, Aug. 18, at the Matina Town Square in Davao City. The group features Aliya Parcs, Jed Maddela and Radha on vocals. The show is presented by Advil, with Zest Soap, Café Puro Jade Blend, Milo and Cebu Pacific.

FREESTYLE AT SMINT SMASH

Freestyle provides entertainment during the "Smint Smash, The First Ever Kissing Party," Aug. 17, 7 p.m. at the posh Power Plant Mall Plaza Garden at the Rockwell Center, Makati City. The event launches the Smint pen dispenser, a unique and practical way to dispense the popular mint. It will be hosted by Smint's exclusive Philippine distributor, ADP Industries Corporation. Freestyle will perform a "Kiss" medley, especially arranged for the event. Director is Louie Ignacio. Smint encourages couples to join as it attempts to set an Asian record for the most number of couples kissing simultaneously in one venue.

MTRCB RATING PG-13 Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult

THE PRODUCING TEAM OF 'BIG DADDY' DELIVERS ANOTHER WINNER!



Schneider, 'ANIMAL': Hayop sa katatawanan

Rob Schneider, lovable Filipino star of the comedy hit DEUCE BIGALOW MALE GIGOLO is back, funnier than ever in Columbia Pictures' THE ANIMAL.

As Marvin Mange, he has the strength of a lion, the agility of a chimpanzee and the affections of... a goat?

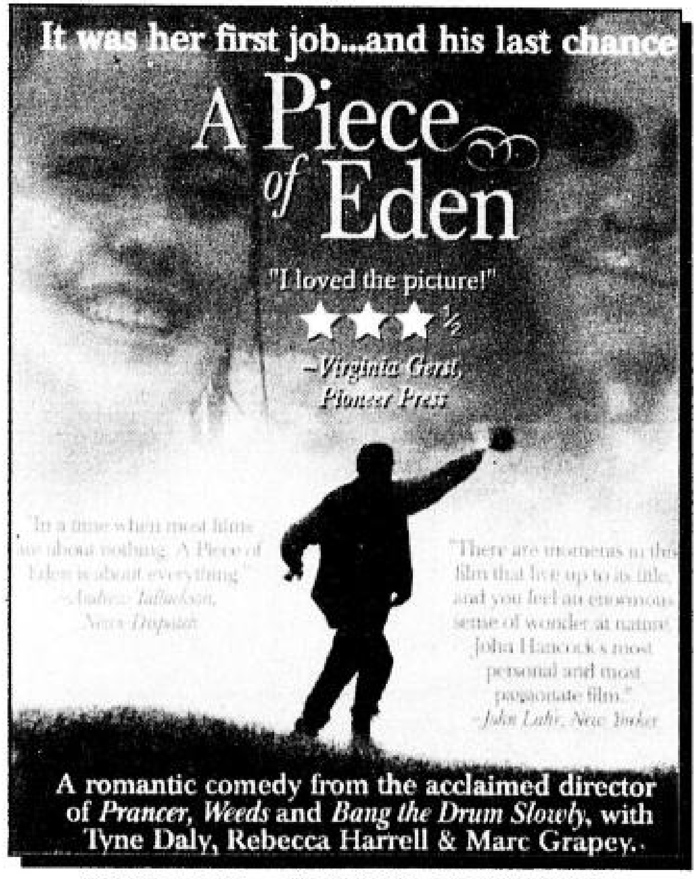
Thanks to a life-saving experimental surgery that fuses his body with animal parts, Marvin's dreams of becoming a cop like his dad come true. Armed with new bulging muscles and a keen sense of smell, he even becomes a police hero, as he saves a drowning boy and sniffs out drug smugglers at the airport.

But complications arise when he starts falling for Rianna (Colleen Haskell, *Survivor*), an animal shelter volunteer. Will he finally be able to control his beastly ways with the woman he loves?

2ND WEEK!

Art Film GLORIETTA 4 Your Alternative Cinema & AYALA CINEMAS present

The Philippine Premiere of



It was her first job...and his last chance
A Piece of Eden
"I loved the picture!" ★★★½ –Virginia Gerst, Pioneer Press
"In a time when most films are about nothing, A Piece of Eden is about everything." –Andrew Tallackson, News Dispatch
"There are moments in this film that live up to its title, and you feel an enormous sense of wonder at nature. John Hancock's most personal and most passionate film." –John Lahr, New Yorker
A romantic comedy from the acclaimed director of Prancer, Weeds and Bang the Drum Slowly, with Tyne Daly, Rebecca Harrell & Marc Grapey.

MTRCB Rating: PARENTAL GUIDANCE 13

A JOHN HANCOCK FILM

A Piece of Eden is a bittersweet comedy that follows three generations of the unlucky Tredici family from Corsica in the 1940's to an Indiana fruit farm in the present. Young Bob, the first member of the family born in America, is heir to the family farm, but has no interest in farming and leaves to pursue a show business career in New York. When his father becomes ill, Bob returns and tries to revitalize the farm while cousin Greg tries to take it away from him. It is from the acclaimed director of *Prancer, Weeds* and *Bang the Drum Slowly*, which stars Tyne Daly, Rebecca Harrell & Marc Grapey.

Featured in the 1999 Chicago International Film Festival, A Piece of Eden placed third, among hundreds of films, in the Audience Choice Awards.

"A moving, powerfully affecting drama in which you discover that you can go home again - but not without laughter and tears."
- Helen Whitney, Director/Writer/Producer

"I've watched it five times and could watch it five more. I loved it."
- Diane Laird, Author

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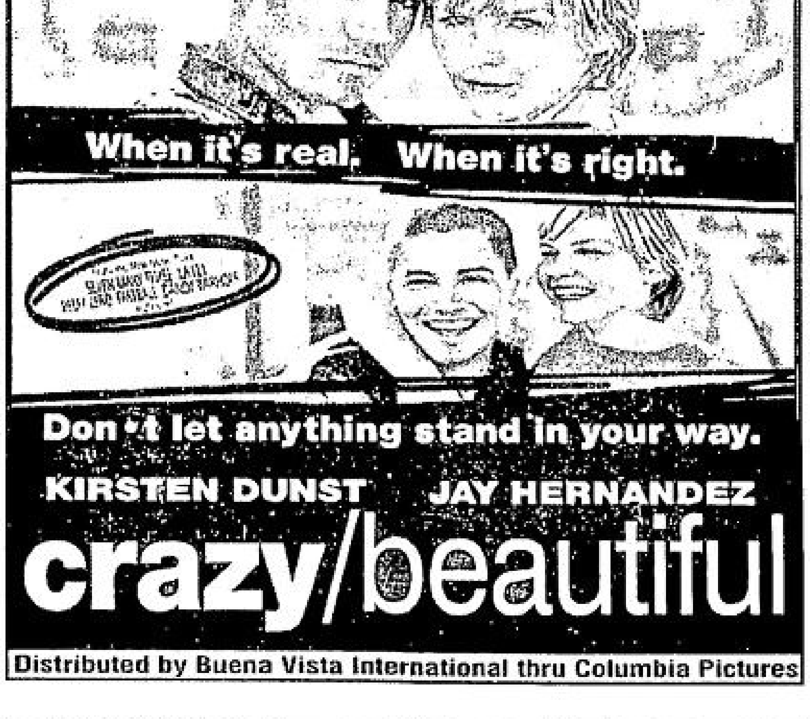
SCREAM - P 13 11:10, 1:20, 3:30, 5:40, 7:50, 10:00	MOULIN ROUGE - P 13 12:00, 2:30, 5:00, 7:30, 10:00	PLANET OF THE APES - P 13 11:00, 1:25, 3:50, 6:15, 8:40, 11:00
PLANET OF THE APES - P 13 12:20, 2:45, 5:10, 7:35, 10:00	PLANET OF THE APES - P 13 11:40, 2:05, 4:30, 6:55, 9:20	BRIDGET JONE'S DIARY - P 13 11:20, 1:30, 3:40, 5:50, 8:00, 10:10

Matinee: P80, Mon.-Fri, 11:10 am to 4:45 pm Screenings, Free Seating.

OPENS AUGUST 22!

MTRCB RATING PG-13 Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult



BREAK THE RULES
When it's real. When it's right.
Don't let anything stand in your way.
KIRSTEN DUNST JAY HERNANDEZ
crazy/beautiful

Distributed by Buena Vista International thru Columbia Pictures

MTRCB RATING PG-13 Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult.

The film contains language which young audiences may find disturbing.
Parents and guardians are strongly cautioned against bringing children 13 years and below.

Renée Zellweger Hugh Grant Colin Firth

SOUNDTRACK INCLUDES IT'S RAINING MEN by GERI HALLIWELL

BRIDGET JONES'S DIARY

For anyone who's ever been set up, stood up, or felt up.

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2	RED DIARIES
3	PLANET OF THE APES
4	RADYO
5	SCREAM... FRIDAY 13TH
6	COOL DUDES
7	VENUS
8	KISS OF THE DRAGON

SM CENTERPOINT 7149522 -7181416

1	COOL DUDES
2	SCREAM... FRIDAY 13TH
3	PLANET OF THE APES
4	STICKMEN
5	PLANET OF THE APES
6	MOULIN ROUGE
7	THE ANIMAL
8	KISS OF THE DRAGON
9	RADYO
10	BRIDGET JONE'S DIARY

SM CITY FAIRVIEW 9350149

1	STICKMEN
2	MOULIN ROUGE
3	KISS OF THE DRAGON
4	PLANET OF THE APES
5	JURASSIC PARK 3
6	COOL DUDES
7	PLANET OF THE APES
8	THE ANIMAL
9	RADYO
10	RED DIARIES
11	SCREAM... FRIDAY 13TH
12	VENUS

SM CITY MANILA 5239249

1	PLANET OF THE APES
2	MOULIN ROUGE
3	BRIDGET JONE'S DIARY
4	SCREAM... FRIDAY 13TH
5	JURASSIC PARK 3
6	PLANET OF THE APES
7	STICKMEN
8	RED DIARIES
9	COOL DUDES
10	KISS OF THE DRAGON
11	RADYO
12	THE ANIMAL

SM MEGAMALL 6331601 • 6329401

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3	KISS OF THE DRAGON
4	STICKMEN
5	THE ANIMAL
6	PLANET OF THE APES
7	SCREAM... FRIDAY 13TH
8	MOULIN ROUGE
9	PLANET OF THE APES
10	RADYO
11	COOL DUDES
12	VENUS

SM TUTUBAN 2514302

1	PLANET OF THE APES
2	RADYO
3	COOL DUDES
4	VENUS

dts DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND•EX

SM CITY NORTH EDSA 9205452

1	MOULIN ROUGE
2	BRIDGET JONE'S DIARY
3	COOL DUDES
4	VENUS
5	SCREAM... FRIDAY 13TH
6	THE ANIMAL
7	PLANET OF THE APES
8	PLANET OF THE APES
9	RADYO
10	PLANET OF THE APES
11	KISS OF THE DRAGON
12	STICKMEN

SM SOUTHMALL 8066888

1	THE ANIMAL
2	STICKMEN
3	PLANET OF THE APES
4	SCREAM... FRIDAY 13TH
5	KISS OF THE DRAGON
6	RED DIARIES
7	COOL DUDES
8	PLANET OF THE APES
9	RADYO
10	VENUS

SM GUADALUPE COMM'L 8820905

1	VENUS
2	PLANET OF THE APES
3	COOL DUDES

SM CEBU 2313836

1	KISS OF THE DRAGON
2	CATS & DOGS
3	PLANET OF THE APES
4	BRIDGET JONE'S DIARY
5	DRIVEN
6	RED DIARIES
7	PLANET OF THE APES

SM ILOILO 3209422

1	BRIDGET JONE'S DIARY
2	CLOSED
3	KISS OF THE DRAGON
4	PLANET OF THE APES
5	RED DIARIES
6	PLANET OF THE APES
7	CLOSED
8	MOULIN ROUGE

SM PAMPANGA 7128005

1	PLANET OF THE APES
2	JURASSIC PARK
3	CATS & DOGS
4	RADYO
5	PLANET OF THE APES
6	COOL DUDES

SM SUCAT 8294675

1	THE ANIMAL
2	COOL DUDES
3	PLANET OF THE APES
4	RADYO

SM DAVAO

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2 CLOSED FOR RENOVATION	2 PLANET OF THE APES in DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND	6 BRIDGET JONE'S DIARY in DTS/SDDS DIGITAL SOUND	2 PLANET OF THE APES in SONY DYNAMIC DIGITAL SOUND	2 PLANET OF THE APES in DSD DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND
3 PLANET OF THE APES	3 PLANET OF THE APES THX in DSD/SDDS/DTS DIGITAL SOUND	7 THE ANIMAL in DTS DIGITAL SOUND	3 BRIDGET JONE'S DIARY in DOLBY STEREO DIGITAL SOUND	3 BRIDGET JONE'S DIARY in DTS DIGITAL SOUND
4 SCREAM, I KNOW WHAT YOU DID...	4 A PIECE OF EDEN (Phil. Premiere) in DTS DIGITAL SOUND Art Film		4 MARTIN NIEVERA LIVE! AUG.24 TO 25 9PM Onstage	4 SCREAM, I KNOW WHAT YOU DID... in DTS DIGITAL SOUND
				5 THE ANIMAL in DTS DIGITAL SOUND

MMTA

METRO MANILA THEATERS ASSOCIATION

MOVIE GUIDE

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EMAIL: mmta@asia.com

Filinvest FESTIVAL CINEMA
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1 (DDS)	KISS OF THE DRAGON
2 (SDDS)	PLANET OF THE APES
3 (DTS)	MOULIN ROUGE
4 GOLD (DTS)	BRIDGET JONE'S DIARY
5 GOLD (DOLBY)	PLANET OF THE APES
6 GOLD (SDDS)	THE ANIMAL
7 GOLD (DOLBY)	PLANET OF THE APES
8 ([illegible])	COOL DUDE'S
9 ([illegible])	RADYO
10 ([illegible])	SCREAM... FRIDAY THE 13TH

Pearl Plaza Cinemas
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1	
2	
3 (DTS)	VENUS
4	
5	
6 (DTS)	PLANET OF THE APES

Golden Pearl THX

Masagana CINEMAX 1-2 & 3
(Kalaw) tel 536.4315

1 (DOLBY)	PLANET OF THE APES
2 (DTS)	VENUS
3	COOL DUDES

Masagana CINEMA
(Pasay) tel 831.6603

1	COOL DUDES
2	PLANET OF THE APES
3	VENUS

starmall Movies
(Shaw Blvd.) tel 724.4986

1	COOL DUDES
2	THE ANIMAL
3	SCREAM... FRIDAY 13TH
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	PLANET OF THE APES
5	VENUS

Metropolis
(Alabang) tel 543.4001

1	RESERVE
2	RESERVE
3	COOL DUDES
4	RED DIARIES
5	SCREAM... FRIDAY 13TH
6	PLANET OF THE APES
7	RADYO
8	VENUS

LOUIE'S CINEMA THX
(Makati City) tel 751.2010/892.3349

1	PLANET OF THE APES

Center Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007

1	JURASSIC PARK 3
2	MAHAL KITA

FCM FAIRVIEW CENTER MALL, INC
tel 930.9515

1	
2	
3	

Spring
(Libertad, Pasay City) tel 831.7864

1	VENUS
A	PLANET OF THE APES

Sunshine
(FTI, Taguig) tel 838.4301 loc. 3376

1	PLANET OF THE APES
2	VENUS
3	RESERVE
4	COOL DUDES

GOTESCO CINEMA

City
(Manila) tel 734.8588

1 (DOLBY)	PLANET OF THE APES
2	RADYO
3	RESERVE
4	VENUS
5	SCREAM... FRIDAY THE 13TH
6	COOL DUDES
7 (DTS)	PLANET OF THE APES
8 (SDDS)	THE ANIMAL
9 (DOLBY)	BRIDGET JONE'S DIARY

Caloocan
tel 362.3508

2	VENUS

Grand Central
(Caloocan) tel 364.3781

1	COOL DUDES
2	RED DIARIES
3	VENUS
4 (SDDS)	PLANET OF THE APES
5	KISS OF THE DRAGON
6 (DOLBY)	SCREAM... FRIDAY 13TH
7 (DTS)	PLANET OF THE APES
8	RADYO
9	THE ANIMAL

Commonwealth
tel 951.0083

1 (DTS)	PLANET OF THE APES
2	COOL DUDES
3	SCREAM... FRIDAY 13TH
4	VENUS
5 (SDDS)	PLANET OF THE APES
6	RADYO
7 (DOLBY)	THE ANIMAL
8	RED DIARIES

Ortigas
tel 656.6795

1	VENUS
2	COOL DUDES
3 (DTS)	PLANET OF THE APES
4	RED DIARIES
5 (SDDS)	PLANET OF THE APES

Universal
(Manila) tel 733.2470

1	COOL DUDES

Sampaguita
(Cubao) tel 911.7888

1	COOL DUDES

Dilson
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Lords	VENUS
Jennet	

THE MARKETPLACE
Mandaluyong tel 533.3851 / 533.3856

1	COOL DUDES
2	PLANET OF THE APES
3	RESERVE
4	VENUS

Prima
(Pasig) tel 641.1215

3	COOL DUDES

Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto SUPER CINERAMA
tel 733.4238

1 (DOLBY)	PLANET OF THE APES
2	SCREAM... FRIDAY THE 13TH
3	RED DIARIES
4	COOL DUDES
5	VENUS

New Divisoria Mall DIVISORIA CINEMA
tel 244.4619

1	COOL DUDES
2	PLANET OF THE APES
3	DUDURUGIN KO . . .
4	RESERVE
5	RESERVE
6	VENUS

Baclaran LRT LRT CINEMA
tel 512.0115

1 (DOLBY)	COOL DUDES
2	VENUS
3	PLANET OF THE APES

Berma
tel 879-2029 or 30

1	VENUS
2	PLANET OF THE APES

CitiMall
(Parañaque) tel 820.7269

1	RESERVE
2	VENUS
3	COOL DUDES
4	PLANET OF THE APES

CINEMA 2000

Cinema 2000 Target Mall
(Sta. Rosa Laguna)
tel (049) 534.2185 / 534.2198

1	DUDURUGIN KO . .
2	COOL DUDES
3 (DTS)	PLANET OF THE APES

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383

1	COOL DUDES
2 (DTS)	RADYO
3 (DOLBY)	PLANET OF THE APES
4	THE ANIMAL

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Biñan) Tel. (049) 411-1146

1	COOL DUDES
2 (DOLBY)	PLANET OF THE APES
3 (DTS)	PLANET OF THE APES
4	RADYO

Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771

1	RADYO
2	PLANET OF THE APES
3	SOON TO OPEN
4	SOON TO OPEN

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276

1 (SDDS)	COOL DUDES
2	VENUS
3	NAKE LIES
4 (DTS)	PLANET OF THE APES

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202

1 (DOLBY)	PLANET OF THE APES
2	RADYO
3 (DTS)	COOL DUDES
4	DUDURUGIN KO . . .
5	THE ANIMAL

Olivarez Tri-Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.8883

1	COOL DUDES
2	PLANET OF THE APES
3	DUDURUGIN KO . . .

Olivarez Los Baños
tel (049) 536.5101

1	COOL DUDES
2	PLANET OF THE APES
3	DUDURUGIN KO . . .

Olivarez Tagaytay
tel (046) 413.0311

1	RADYO
2	THE ANIMAL
3	DUDURUGIN KO . . .

Morales Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.9736

1	SPOT
2	PLANET OF THE APES
3	DUDURUGIN KO . . .

Cabuyao
(Laguna City) tel (049) 531.4808

1 (DTS)	COOL DUDES
2 (DTS)	PLANET OF THE APES

Fourstep
(Cavite) tel (046) 416.2385

1	COOL DUDES

Emperor
(Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657

1	DUDURUGIN KO . . .
2	COOL DUDES
3	KISS OF THE DRAGON

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

1	PLANET OF THE APES
2	KISS OF THE DRAGON
3	RED DIARIES
4	RADYO

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03

1 (DOLBY EX)	TOM CAT
2	RADYO
3	BRIDGET JONE'S DIARY
4 (DTS EX)	PLANET OF THE APES

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4	MOULIN ROUGE
5	PLANET OF THE APES
6	PLANET OF THE APES
7	SCREAM... FRIDAY THE 13TH
8	THE ANIMAL
9	COOL DUDES
10	BRIDGET JONE'S DIARY

ERMITA 536-7809 TO 12

1	PLANET OF THE APES
2	SCREAM... FRIDAY THE 13TH
3	STICKMEN
4	BRIDGET JONE'S DIARY
5	COOL DUDES
6	PLANET OF THE APES
7	THE ANIMAL

NOVALICHES 935-3229 TO 31

1	UNDER REGULAR CHECK UP
2	PLANET OF THE APES
3	UNDER REGULAR CHECK UP
4	PLANET OF THE APES
5	SCREAM... FRIDAY THE 13TH
6	COOL DUDES
7	BRIDGET JONE'S DIARY
8	VENUS

IMUS (046) 471-8168

1	PLANET OF THE APES
2	PLANET OF THE APES
3	COOL DUDES
4	SCREAM... FRIDAY THE 13TH
5	VENUS
6	THE ANIMAL

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ALI MALL CINEPLEX-4 (SDDS)	PLANET OF THE APES
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-5 (DTS)	PLANET OF THE APES
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-6 (DOLBY)	KISS OF THE DRAGON
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-7 (DOLBY)	SCREAM... FRIDAY THE 13TH
FARMERS PLAZA-1 (DOLBY)	STICKMEN
FARMERS PLAZA-2 (DOLBY)	PLANET OF THE APES
FIESTA CARNIVAL	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
NEW FRONTIER	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
MANILA	
EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	BALAHIBONG PUSA/ BODY TO BODY
ODEON	PLANET OF THE APES
ODEON-2	SCREAM... FRIDAY THE 13TH
ROBEN	VENUS DIOSA NG KARAGATAN
TANDEM-1	TURN ON
TANDEM-2	PARU PARONG LIGAW
TIMES	TIGER/ VALENTINE
QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	CLOSED
ACT-4	CLOSED
CORONET-2	COOL DUDES
QUEZON-1	VENUS DIOSA NG KARAGATAN
REMAR	PLANET OF THE APES
REMAR-2	VENUS DIOSA NG KARAGATAN
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OCEAN CINEMA-B	CRISELDA
MANDALUYONG CITY	
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	PLANET OF THE APES
CINEMA-2	BRITISH FILM FESTIVAL
CAINTA RIZAL	
STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	RADYO
CINEMA-2	RED DIARIES
CINEMA-3	BRIDGET JONE'S DIARY
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	PLANET OF THE APES
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	KISS OF THE DRAGON
CINEMA-6	MOULIN ROUGE
CINEMA-7	JURASSIC PARK 3
CINEMA-8	VENUS
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	PLANET OF THE APES
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	PLANET OF THE APES
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	THE ANIMAL
CINEMA-12	SCREAM LAST FRIDAY THE 13TH
CINEMA-14	STICKMEN
CINEMA-15	COOL DUDES
LORES	
CINEMA-2	CLOSED
CINEMA-3	CLOSED
POWER PLANT CINEMA	
CINEMA-1	SCREAM LAST FRIDAY THE 13TH
CINEMA-2	MOULIN ROUGE
CINEMA-3	PLANET OF THE APES
CINEMA-4	PLANET OF THE APES
CINEMA-5	PLANET OF THE APES
CINEMA-6	BRIDGET JONE'S DIARY
UNIWIDE METROMALL	
(LAS PINAS)	
CINEMA-1	RESERVE
CINEMA-2	RESERVE
CINEMA-4	RESERVE
UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL	
(PARANAQUE)	
CINEMA-1	UOD SA LAMAN
CINEMA-2	WALANG LUPANG TATAPAKAN
CINEMA-4	ITAKWIL MAN AKO NG LANGIT

NU 107 holds campus tour

ROCK bastion NU 107 continues its annual campus tour, "Rockology 107."

Top bands will headline the campus show—Wolfgang and Itchyworms at UP Los Baños on Aug 17; Battery and Dictalicense at St. Scholastica's College Manila on Aug. 24.

"Rockology 107" will be aired live over dwNU 107.5 FM. It is sponsored by Creamsilk Conditioner, Granny Goose Kornets, New Axe Deostick, Pacific Internet and Smint.

"Rockology 107" starts 6 p.m. Tickets are available at the venue for P50.

Watch out for more exciting NU 107 events and the launch of NUTV Channel 37 soon.

UK DJ in dance event

UK DJ AJ Gibson will be at the helm of the first unique dance party, to be held at the Glorietta Activity Center in Makati on Saturday, Aug. 18.

The super club brand GodsKitchen stops in Manila and hosts an event that only the likes of The Big Fish Crew, Traxx and Amen can bring.

GodsKitchen is the UK club that has made a name for itself through sheer persistence and by producing innovative gigs.

Since the early '90s, GodsKitchen steadily went from producing sold-out dance events around Australia and the UK, headlined by world-class DJs Paul Oakenfold, Judge Jules and Seb Fontaine, to setting up residences in Ibiza and now finding a home in the multi-million-pound club Code in England.

The event is presented by Globe Gentxt, My Globe and Globe IDD, with Ayala Center.

The Glorietta Mall re-opens at 10 p.m. Tickets are at P400. Special ticket prices are offered for Globe subscribers—P200 for Globe users, P100 for Gentxt members and free for Gentxt members who register between Aug. 1 to 18.

GodsKitchen is also presented by Tiger Beer, U2 Clothing, Viva Mineral Water, Tower Records, Music One, Crossover 105.1, NU 107, Joey@92.3 and MTV Philippines. Bar host is Where Else at Hotel InterCon.

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GET a copy of the 4th issue of Pelikula! Pelikula: A Journal of Philippine Cinema is one of the beneficiary projects of the LRP Foundation, published jointly with the U-P College of Mass Communication. Special discounts given to Louie's THX members.

Hear the Difference, Feel the Excitement

Innovative, exciting visuals aren't enough

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

MOVIES are supposed to "speak" in a unique visual language that distinguishes the film medium from its stage and radio "cousins." All too often, however, films are more verbal than visual, especially on the local scene, where the cinema has its roots in the zarsuela, radio dramas, komiks and serialized novels in pulp magazines.

That's why it's a special delight to see films by visually oriented artists. On the local film scene, the movies of **Celso Ad. Castillo, Peque Gallaga, Kidlat Tahimik, Raymond Red** and **Erik Matti** come to mind—and now, since his first feature-film outing, "Balahibong Pusa," the movies of **Yam Laranas**.

Castillo and Gallaga have had long careers as directors because they have complemented their keen visual sense with other directorial requisites, like the ability to tell a good, strong story, and the knack for eliciting felt and textured performances from their actors.

On the other hand, Kidlat Tahimik has restricted himself to short, alternative filmmaking; Red's two feature films were poorly acted; Matti's movies are more style-and gimick-oriented than substantial—and, as for Laranas, his exciting and innovative visualizations aren't supported by strong script and storytelling sense.

This was initially apparent in "Balahibong Pusa," and is even more of a problem in his second feature, "Radyo," which is quirkier than his first movie.

The material (we can't really call it a full-bodied story) of "Radyo" gives the filmmaker many opportunities to show off his visual dexterity and edginess. The protagonist is a radio announcer (**Rufa Mae Quinto**) who attracts a weird following—none weirder than the spaced-out character played by **Jeffrey Quizon**, a department store employee who turns into a serial killer when his crush spurns his advances. Rufa Mae herself becomes the freaky young man's target when she fails to play his request on her program.

This already sinister scene is made even freakier by the addition of other strange or even bizarre characters, including dwarfs and giants, that Laranas' camera renders more gross or outre with shots taken from acute angles, distorted perspectives, etc.

This visual byplay is initially interesting and occasionally hip and droll, but it soon overstays, its welcome when we realize that the visual hijinks don't really intend to go anywhere much in terms of theme, plot or character development.

This is okay for some viewers who are happy with playful, imaginative visualizations and weird, kinky characterizations for their own sake. But we think that the majority of moviegoers still want to be told a good, meaningful story and to empathize with strong, well-developed characters, so this movie may have a hard time accessing the mainstream audience—and the other way around.

Visually-creative filmmakers like Laranas are precisely what the movie industry needs, but they have to realize that they can't wing it on a visual lark alone, but must hone essential complementary skills like good scripting and handling of actors.

In "Radyo," for instance, Rufa Mae turns in a quirky but lethargic performance, while Jeffrey is all over the place, not really intent on developing his character, but bent more on advertising himself as a "colorful" performer. Jeffrey, we already have **Amay Bisaya** and **Rod Navarro**, okay? So, cool it, and get your thespic priorities straight.

As for director Laranas, we really want him to succeed because he can infuse local movies with some of the visual vitality and inventiveness it needs, but he clearly needs to work with a strong scriptwriter to really get cracking as a feature-film director.

The question is, will he see the need for this, or will he blithely still try to wing it just on his visual sense alone?

Viva Cinema

POPS Fernandez is trapped in a loveless marriage with an ambitious and vicious man in "Gusto Ko Nang Lumigaya," which airs on Viva Cinema, 8 tonight.

The husband is played by Albert Martinez, who doesn't want the marriage annulled because of his political plans.

He hires Diether Ocampo, a detective, to report on his wife's infidelity. But Albert's pawn takes the wrong turn.

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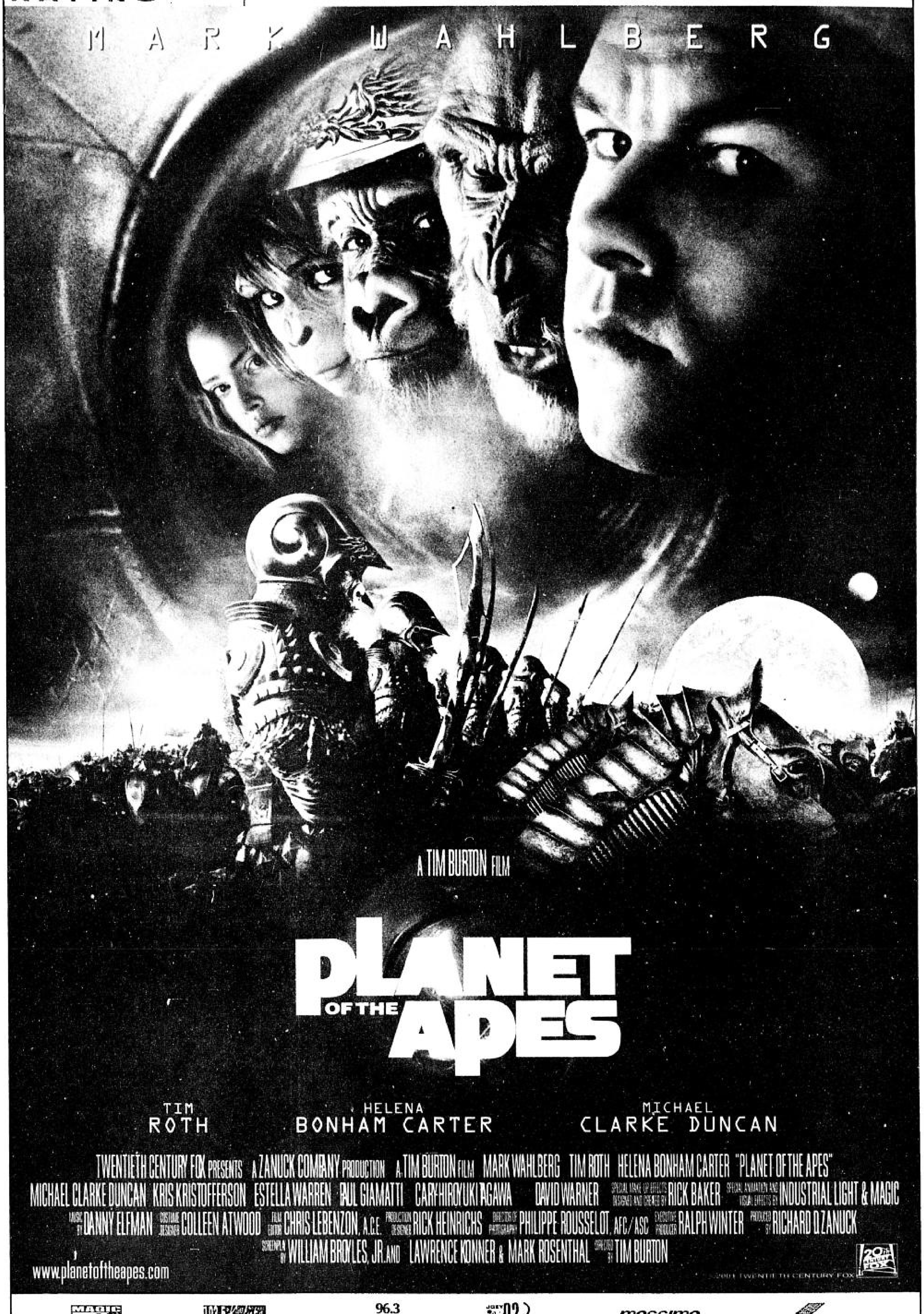

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ENTERTAINMENT

Louie C. Camino, Editor

Tom Cruise, Penelope Cruz make public dating debut

LOS ANGELES—Less than a week after his divorce from Nicole Kidman was finalized, actor Tom Cruise debuted with a new leading lady, appearing publicly with long-rumored love interest Penelope Cruz late Monday.

Cruise, who officially became single Aug. 8, escorted Cruz to the Beverly Hills premiere of the 27-year-old Spanish starlet's new romance, "Captain Corelli's Mandolin."

It was the first public appearance by the couple, rumored to be dating since they worked together on "Vanilla Sky," due out in December.

Cruise, 39, began divorce proceedings against Kidman, his second wife, in February. A judge made it official on Aug. 8.

The night before, Cruise and Kidman, 33, arrived separately at a screening of "The Others," a thriller by Spanish director Alejandro Almenabar. Kidman starred in the movie and Cruise was its executive producer.

A friend of the Australian star told People Magazine: "Nicole was just totally in shock" about Cruise's romance with Cruz, especially since her former husband had denied the rumors the two were an item.

"She said: 'He flat out swore to me up and down that there was nothing going on,'" said the friend, whose was not named.

Set in Italian-occupied Greece during World War II, "Captain Corelli's Mandolin," due for North American release Aug. 17, tells the story of Antonio Corelli (Nicolas Cage), an officer with a passion for music who wins the heart of Pelagia (Cruz), the shy daughter of a local doctor.

Cage leaves mark at Mann's

Meanwhile, Nicolas Cage sunk his hands and feet in wet cement Tuesday at the Chinese Theater forecourt in Hollywood, much as he says he tried to do with the role he took in the war saga, "Captain Correli's Mandolin."

The tradition of leaving prints in the forecourt began by accident in 1927, when actress Norma Talmadge stepped into a freshly laid sidewalk and theater owner Sid Grauman preserved the evidence of her visit to his newly opened establishment.

For years, it has been done to memorialize an actor and publicize an upcoming movie.

Not only hands and feet, but oddities like Whoopi Goldberg's braids, Al Jolson's knee, Jimmy Durante's nose and Betty Grable's leg grace the forecourt, which thousands of tourists visit each year.

"I used to come here when I was a kid," Cage told fans.

"And I'd look at all my heroes, like Humphrey Bogart, and their hands and feet and thought about 'Well, God, wouldn't that be great if one day that could happen, and you've all made it happen," he said after plopping hands-first into the gray cement.

Cage, 37, got support from family members and friends, including girlfriend Lisa Marie Presley, Jim Carrey and Jay Leno.

During a recent tour to publicize "Captain Corelli's Mandolin," Cage talked about his preparation for the film, something for which he has gained a reputation in Hollywood.

"I had to learn the accent, learn the mandolin, learn the opera singing, learn the marching, learn the conducting," he told radio station KCAL.

"It was like I was going to some sort of Italian musical military camp."

Cage, who plays the mandolin himself in the film, said it was "like I went into a focus mode, where I had to learn within three months how to play four or five songs. Once I was done with the movie, I just put it down.

"It helps me to stretch myself. I never know if it's going to work or not, but at least I feel like I'm still growing," said the Italian-American actor.

AFP

Sunday bloody Sunday

KRIS AND TELL

Kris Aquino

JOSH'S health saga still hasn't ended. Sunday afternoon, still a bit drowsy since I'd taken a Benadryl Allergy Sinus caplet at 11 a.m. because I couldn't stop sneezing and had a runny nose, I was relaxing and monitoring "The Buzz," in the bedroom Josh and I are sharing while we bunk with my mom. My *Ate* (that's my oldest sister **Ballsy**) came into the room, panic-stricken, telling me that Josh's injured leg was bleeding, and bleeding a lot.

My mom's dining and living rooms have white tile flooring. Immediately I saw a puddle of blood surrounding Josh's chair. *Yaya* Ana's beige pants were covered in blood. My mom was handing *Yaya* Ana a towel to hold over Josh's wound. My sister **Viel** was saying that she would get the driver ready so that we could take Josh to the emergency room.

I quickly put on jeans and a shirt and shoved my feet into sneakers. I grabbed my bag and rushed out. **Mel**, my mom's bodyguard, was the only one strong enough to carry Josh's nearly 85-pound heft.

Because it was a Sunday and the whole family would be around, as luck would have it, I'd given Josh's male nurse, **Jojo**, the day off. Josh's injured thigh continued oozing blood.

Sedation

We rushed to St. Luke's. It took us just five minutes to get there since it was a Sunday. By now the doctors at the emergency room were already familiar with us, this being a return visit.

All the way to the hospital I was frantically trying to get hold of Dr. **George Canlas**, Josh's orthopedic surgeon. Again, because it was Sunday, his cell phone was just ringing.

Despite my being frantic, I recognized one of Josh's emergency room doctors as **Iris Domingo**, an elementary school classmate of mine in Poveda. She had the most calming manner and she was able to make Josh allow them to clean, dress and wrap his wound. She was also the one who was able to inject Josh with a sedative to help him fall asleep so that he wouldn't insist on walking around, which puts undue pressure on his injured thigh.

They were able to get Dr. Canlas on the phone and he told me to continue giving Josh another week's worth of antibiotics and that he'd visit us at home Monday afternoon.

What happened

When we got home, my mom and Ate, who were nearest the scene, were able to relate what happened. Josh was chasing after my nephew **Jonty**. Jonty is a favorite of all the younger kids and we refer to him as a sort of "Pied Piper."

Josh took a tumble, his open wound's scab peeled off and the blood just started gushing out, almost like a fountain. My mom feared the worst that after having been run over by the Expedition van, Josh's thigh might have really had deep tissue damage and a blood vessel might have now burst.

In St. Luke's our fears were laid to rest. The pressure of the Expedition's wheel and weight having gone over his thigh had caused Josh to have internal bleeding. His skin hadn't broken so the blood that had clotted inside stayed there. If Josh were immobilized, Dr. Canlas said, the blood would flow down and be absorbed. Since Josh is hyperactive and can't sit still even for just five minutes, there was no chance for the swelling to subside. That's why when the wound burst open, the blood came rushing out.

What Josh lost was most likely between 300 cc and 400 cc. Whether from an adult or a 6-year-old, that's a lot of blood.

Mom's stress

My mom said we should have asked the doctors while Josh was confined if he needed to have that blood drained out. She also told Josh, while we were trying to put him to sleep, that he'd given her too much "excitement" and that she was too old for this to happen so often!

If Josh's skin had broken immediately during the accident, we would've had a harder time controlling the bleeding and he'd have needed surgery.

Again, someone in heaven must really be looking out for Josh. It was 10 days after the accident that he expelled the blood, time enough for some internal healing to naturally occur, and this was already clotted blood that could be expelled without need for a transfusion.

Let me take this opportunity to apologize to the organizers of the Cebu Ayala Mall launch that **Boy Abunda** and I were scheduled to host tomorrow. I've had to back out from it because until Josh is fully and totally recovered, it's very difficult for me to leave him for a prolonged period of time. *Sayang*, because the talent fee from that was supposed to pay for my new IMac. For the sake of Josh and to spare my mom from more stress, I'm staying put.

Healing

According to Dr. Canlas, we should give Josh another month to six weeks to fully recover. As of now, his wound is still very fresh and it will take another 10 days for the external wound to dry. We have to keep it exposed but it has to be kept very clean to ward off any infection. Internally, it will take a longer time to fully heal. Luckily, because he's a child, he will heal relatively fast.

After putting Josh to sleep, I had to go straight to ABS-CBN's studio 2 for my "Kris and Tell" taping. There was no way to pack it up since the episodes I'd be taping were for airing on the next two days.

When I got home to find Josh awake (this was around 1 a.m. and the sedative had worn off) and exclaiming "*Tapos na si* Mama *mag*-work," I got wracked with guilt. I should've been there beside my son so that when he woke up my face would've been the first he'd seen.

Yet Josh readily accepts that my work does take me away from him. I work very hard because I do take care of all our financial needs, but I also have to admit that I work this hard because of the fulfillment my career gives me. I need this for us to live comfortably, and I also need this because I love what I do.

***

I JUST finished reading **James Patterson**'s first love story, "Suzanne's Diary for Nicholas" (I bought my copy from Powerbooks for P859).

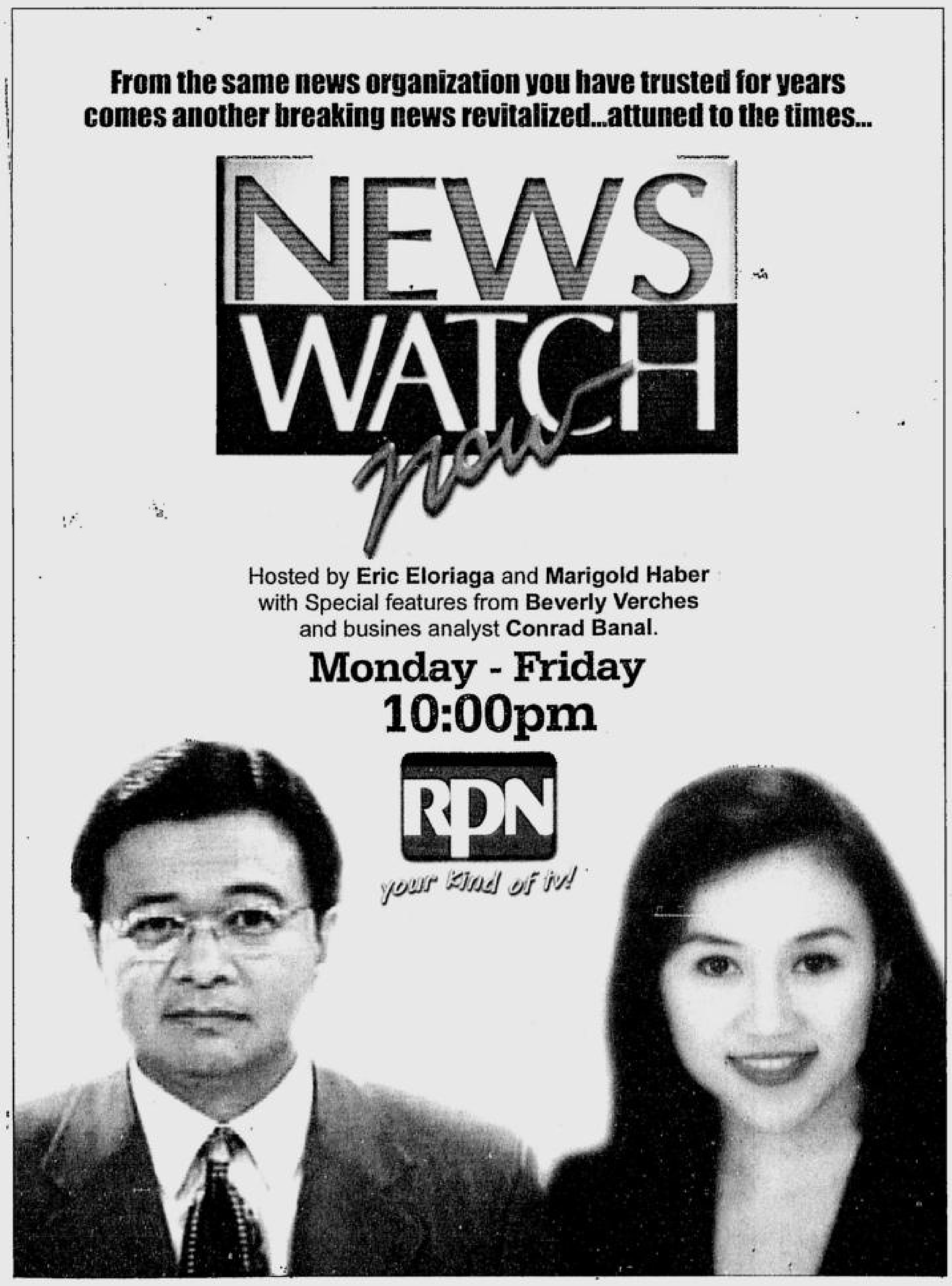
He's my favorite mystery author, but this was a clear departure for him. It's a touching story about cherishing each day you've been given with your loved ones, realizing that each day is borrowed time from the Lord, and having the strength to accept His will. In the end it's also a story about surrendering to His will, coming to terms with your fears and having the faith that it's possible to love again.

Let me share with you a passage from that novel that struck a very strong message.

"Imagine life is a game in which you are juggling five balls. The balls are called work, family, health, friends, and integrity. And you're keeping all of them in the air. But one day you finally come to understand that work is a rubber ball. If you drop it, it will bounce back. The other four balls—family, health, friends, integrity—are made of glass. If you drop one of these, it will be irrevocably scuffed, nicked, perhaps even shattered. And once you truly understand the lesson of the five balls, you will have the beginnings of balance in your life."

***

Let me end this column by greeting my oldest sister Ballsy, my Ate, a very happy birthday tomorrow. She's the most selfless, kindhearted, caring and nurturing sister a girl could ever want, or need.



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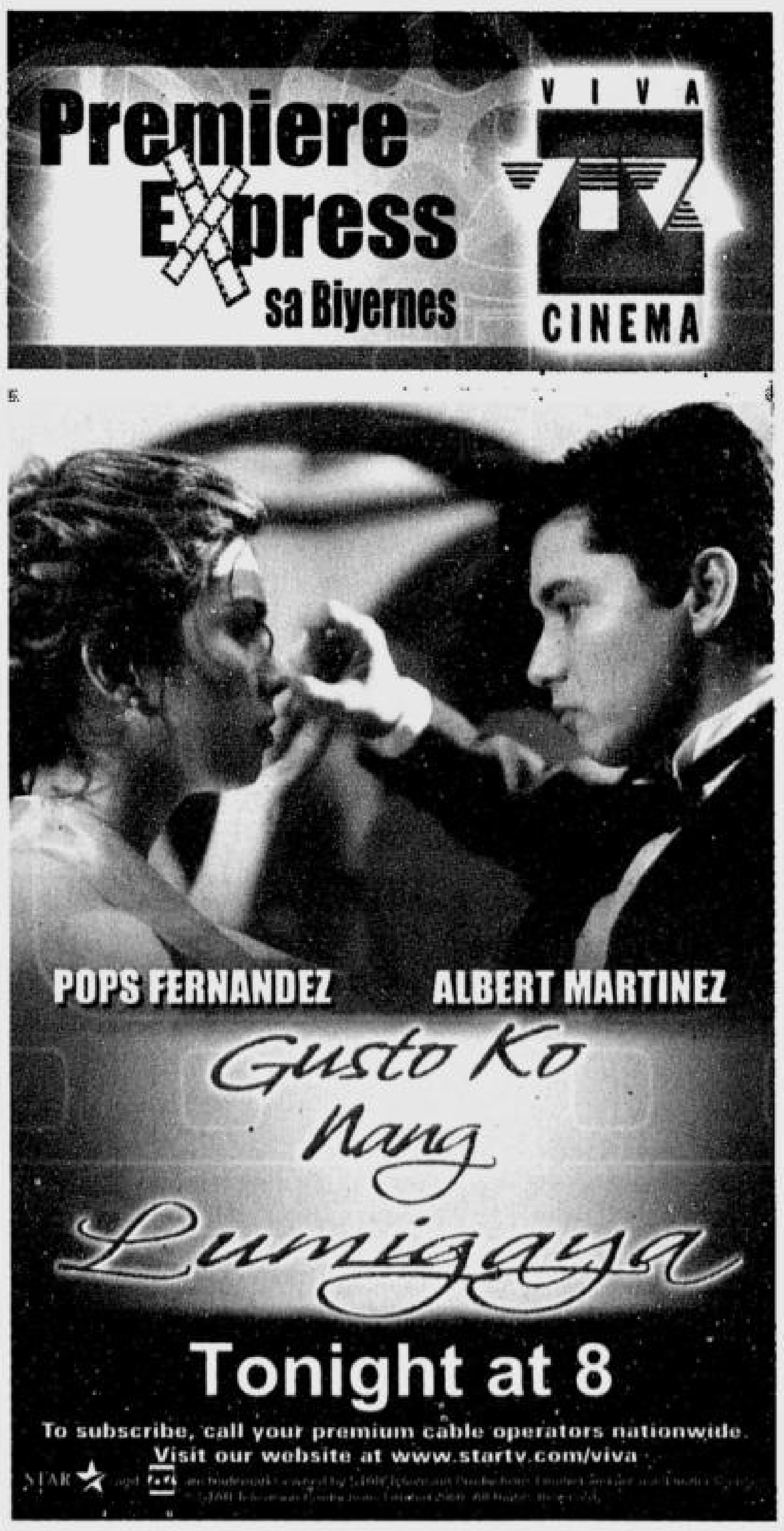

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Bangko Sentral keeps rates unchanged

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas decided to give the financial markets a respite as it decided to leave overnight interest rates unchanged after its weekly policy-making Monetary Board meeting yesterday.

Deputy Governor Amando Tetangco told reporters: "No change, we decided not to alter overnight rates. No need to change monetary policy."

The overnight borrowing rate stands at 9 percent and the lending rate at 11.25 percent. The central bank began easing rates in December 2000 and has now cut rates by six percentage points, following a four percentage point hike in October last year.

TETANGCO

Tetangco also said there was no change in commercial banks' reserve requirements, which now stands at 20 percent after a four percentage point hike since end-July to help prop up the weak peso. "No change in liquidity reserves, but the BSP is considering it an option in case there's still excess liquidity that can put pressure on inflation either directly or by the weakening of the exchange rate," he said.

The deputy governor declined to comment on the recent strengthening of the peso, which closed yesterday at 50.95 to $1.

The peso has recovered from around 53.50 to the dollar at the start of the month.

Tetangco said the BSP would observe how the recent policy adjustments on interest rates and reserve requirement would affect the financial markets.

BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura, who is in the United States to attend a Federal Reserve seminar, said early this week that local monetary authorities would still consider another increase in the reserve requirement.

He said the option was being considered if the economy would continue to slow down in the coming months.

"I think the excess liquidity has been taken out for the time being unless the economy slows down further and we may have to do something again," said the central bank chief.

The growth in money supply in the system has declined to almost 13 percent as of June but the BSP was still worried that the decline in the growth of domestic liquidity from 14.7 percent a month ago remained a threat to inflation.

INDICATORS

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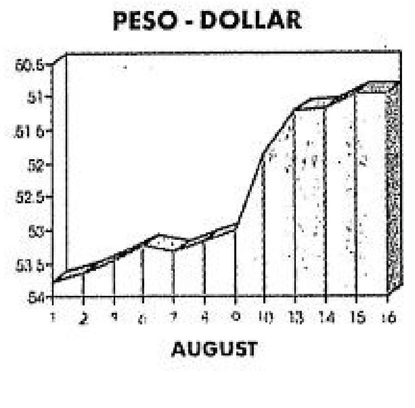


GRAPHS BY ROBERT B. ANDRES

Peso-Dollar Rate

₱ 50.95 = $1

As of 5 p.m., August 16, 2001

¥ 119.34 = $1

The US dollar was trading at 119.34 as of 5 p.m., August 16, 2001

GOLD:$275.15/275.65

per ounce Hong Kong, August 16, 2001

STOCK MARKET

Stocks fall 0.7%

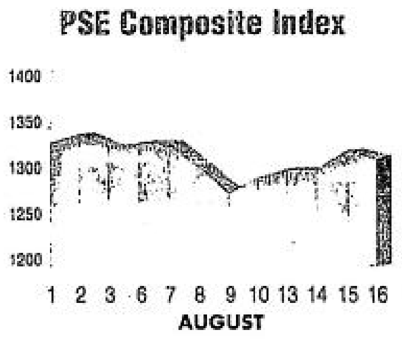
SHARE prices fell 0.7 percent yesterday as continued selling by foreign funds offset selective buying of blue chips by local players, dealers said.

"We are seeing some bargain hunting on blue chip stocks," said Fitzgerald Aclan of KGI Securities Inc.

However, this was "not enough to offset the selling by the foreigners."

The Philippine Stock Exchange composite index fell 8.94 points to 1,316.22.

AFP



(See stock market report on Page B2)

Gov't backs more liberal tax incentives

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE GOVERNMENT is backing a bill in Congress pushing for the granting of income tax breaks for up to 12 years subject to the approval of the finance secretary.

Albay Rep. Joey Sarte Salceda, author of the bill restructuring the fiscal incentives under the Omnibus Investments Code, said the proposal to extend the maximum income tax holiday from eight years to 12 years would align the country's fiscal perks with those of neighboring countries.

Salceda said that this would put the Philippines' incentive package more attractive than Taiwan (10 years); at par with Malaysia and Singapore (12 years), and closer to the fiscal perks granted by the United States and some European countries (15 years).

"By matching this incentive being offered by other countries, we stand a sufficiently even chance of attracting investments and partners that will be crucial in our drive for development," Salceda said.

The Board of Investment has been pushing for a 12-year income tax holiday since last year but the political crisis blocked its legislation in the previous Congress.

Based on his proposal, Metro Manila-based projects can be eligible for 12-year tax breaks if they are worth at least $25 million, manufacture a pioneering product in the country, and approved by the finance secretary. Projects outside the National Capital Region need only to get the finance secretary's nod. Investments in the information technology sector need not get the finance secretary's nod to get the maximum tax breaks.

Investment projects that seek the extended tax breaks would not be entitled to the incentives for accelerated depreciation and investment tax allowances.

The proposed bill also allows for duty-free imports of capital equipment within five years after its enactment; net operating loss carryover; tax credits on purchased components of locally produced equipment; deferred imposition of 2-percent minimum corporate income tax; investment tax allowance, and double deduction for training and research and development.

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	Wagon	₱ 1,710.000	₱ 855,000	₱ 47,500	ZERO% INTEREST
VECTRA 2.0L A/T	Sedan	₱ 1,165.000	₱ 582,500	₱ 32,362	ZERO% INTEREST
	Wagon	₱ 1,245.000	₱ 622,500	₱ 34,583	ZERO% INTEREST
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UPGRADING

DBS unit, BPI Family to merge

By Elena R. Torrijos

BANK of the Philippine Islands will merge new acquisition DBS Bank Philippines with wholly owned thrift bank BPI Family Bank in order to upgrade the latter into a regular commercial bank, BPI president Xavier Loinaz said in an interview.

The Ayala-controlled BPI and Development Bank of Singapore announced on Wednesday that they had reached an agreement for BPI, through BPI Family Bank, to acquire 100 percent of the shares of the Singaporean bank's local subsidiary, DBS Bank Philippines, for P1.6 billion.

In an interview, BPI Family Bank president Aurelio Montinola III said that the planned upgrade of the thrift bank's status to that of a commercial bank via the merger with DBS Bank Philippines would enhance the bank's deposit-taking capability. The bank, however, will continue to focus on its consumer banking business.

BPI Family has about 100 branches while DBS Bank Philippines has 20 branches, mostly in Metro Manila.

Montinola said that the merger of the two banks should be fully completed within the next six months, after which the merged entity would rank as one of the top 15 largest banks in the country.

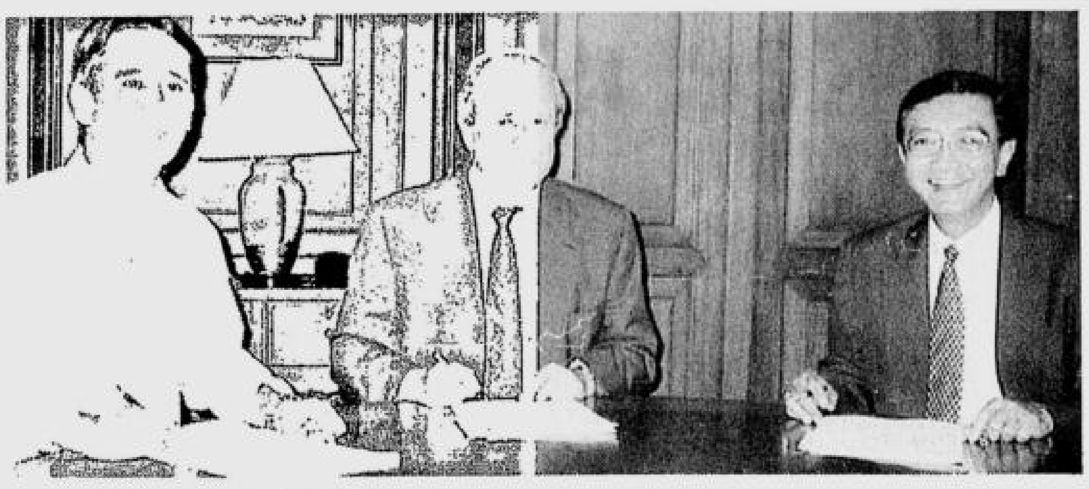
In a statement, DBS officials said its divestment, which consolidated its Philippine investments into its 21-percent stake in BPI, was an obvious and long-anticipated one.

"Our sense is that our time and attention in the Philippines is best invested in a larger, more established banking franchise such as BPI. DBS Bank Philippines, with a rather small presence in the Philippine market, would require substantial investment to fuel organic growth. This transaction is one that benefits both parties and DBS Bank Philippines' customers as well since it will open a substantial new range of services and products as part of BPI," the bank official said.

Meanwhile, in a separate interview, Ayala Corp. president and BPI director Jaime Augusto Zobel III said that while the group was comfortable with the current balance of shareholders in BPI, it was open to further discussions for DBS to increase its stake in the bank.

DBS is the flagship bank of DBS Group Holdings Singapore. It is ranked among the top banks in Asia and is the 70th biggest in the world.

BPI is the country's second largest bank in terms of assets, which reached P393 billion as of end-2000.



BPI ACQUIRES DBS BANK

150-year-old Bank of the Philippine Islands (BPI) announced its acquisition of the Philippine unit of the Development Bank of Singapore (DBS Bank) on Aug. 15. The agreement to buy DBS Bank Philippines was signed by BPI president Xavier Loinaz (center), BPI senior executive vice president Aurelio Montinola III (left) and DBS managing director Lim Kim Quee (right).

Telecom firms shine in dull first semester

TELECOMMUNICATIONS firms were the stars of the Philippine corporate world in the first half of the year, posting substantial increases in earnings over a period marked by an economic downturn.

"On aggregate, our estimate is that first half profits grew about 22 percent. The only real standout was telecoms, because stripped of telecoms, the profits only grew about 4 percent on aggregate," said Jojo Gonzales, head of strategy at Merrill Lynch Securities Philippines Inc.

Other major sectors that performed well were food and beverage sectors helped by election campaign-related spending, and retailers traditionally resilient to economic downturn.

"The consumer companies are the ones that are doing best," said Luz Lorenzo, an analyst at ATR-KIM Eng Securities.

Banking and property sectors posted results more or less in line with expectations. One analyst said utilities, in particular Manila Electric Co., was disappointing.

The company's first half net income dropped 46.1 percent owing to higher expenses such as higher pension related costs.

The Philippine stock market's main index has fallen 12 percent since the beginning of this year as of Thursday.

Lorenzo said while earnings had been dull so far this year, she expected improvement in 2002 riding on better economic growth.

While heavily indebted telecommunications companies performed poorly, market leaders such as Globe Telecom Inc. and Smart Communications Inc. continued to see subscriber growth. Both have become main revenue drivers for their parents.

Smart is a unit of the country's largest telecommunications firm Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. (PLDT) and Globe is a joint venture between Ayala Corp. and Singapore Telecoms.

PLDT's first-half net income rose sharply to P1.37 billion from P122.5 million. Smart's revenue for the period was at P10.5 billion, out of PLDT's total revenue at P36.72 billion.

Globe's net income in the period surged to P2.55 billion from P620.76 million and its revenues grew to P15.45 billion against P8.37 billion.

Globe and Bank of the Philippine Islands (BPI) helped sustain Ayala Corp.'s first half net, the Philippines' largest conglomerate, which grew 1.2 percent year-on-year capped by costs.

Alvin Tan, telecommunications analyst at ABN AMRO Asia Securities, said he expected growth in mobile phone subscribers to continue to offset the expected decline in national and long-distance fixed line revenues.

"The expectation is that the (mobile phone) market can accommodate the penetration of 20-25 percent (of the total population) from the current 11 percent," Tan said.

If the current growth was sustained, the 20-25 percent penetration could be attained by 2003, but Tan said he was a bit more conservative and expected that to happen in 2004-2005.

But foreign exchange losses and higher interest payments of Bayan Telecommunications, currently in debt restructuring talks, hurt another conglomerate Benpres Holdings Corp., which posted a net loss of P709 million in the first half. *Reuters*

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Ayala says Burger King chain attracting suitors

CONGLOMERATE Ayala Corp. said yesterday it had received letters from several parties interested in acquiring its Burger King fast-food business.

"We have received several expressions of interest," Ayala Corp.'s senior managing director and consultant for the sale of the franchise, Delfin L. Lazaro, said.

He said the approaches came mainly from unlisted Philippine-based firms.

Ayala Corp. left out the Burger King business when it sold its processed meats firm, Pure Foods Corp., to food and beverage company San Miguel Corp. in May.

Pure Foods used to hold the franchise.

San Miguel asked that the Burger King business be excluded from the sale to avoid a conflict of interest as it was already supplying the meat and chicken requirements of rival fast food businesses Jollibee Foods Corp. and McDonalds Philippines.

Lazaro said no time frame had been set for the disposal of the franchise, which involves about 40 Burger King outlets nationally, although a formal sales process was underway.

He was unable to reveal the identities of the interested parties or give an indication of the value of the assets up for grabs.

Ayala Corp. shares were unchanged at P6.40 in early trade yesterday. Pure Foods stock was untraded, last closing on Wednesday at P90.

San Miguel has been on a buying binge in a bid to boost its core businesses. Only recently, it completed the acquisition of Cosmos Bottling Corp. from the RFM group, a move that is expected to bolster the conglomerate's hold on the local soft drink market. San Miguel has also recently reacquired Coca Cola Bottlers Philippines Inc. from its Australian owner. *Reuters*

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MRT consortium wants to undertake extension project

METRO Rail Transit Corp. (MRTC) said it was ready to undertake the 5.5-kilometer extension of the Edsa MRT that will link the system to the Light Rail Transit (LRT).

"We are prepared for this project as we were prepared to build the Edsa MRT years back," MRTC chair Robert Sobrepeña said, stressing that the group was credited with the on-time completion of the Edsa facility that has greatly improved travel on the country's main thoroughfare.

Despite government plans to bid out or renegotiate the project, Sobrepeña said the consortium was prepared to fulfill its earlier contract to build the link connecting the MRT's North Triangle Station to the LRT's Caloocan terminal.

"We have an existing contract with the government, the terms of which we are ready to fulfill," he said. "The MRTC is prepared to undertake this important railway project that will be a great service to Metro Manila commuters."

Sobrepeña likewise pointed out that MRTC was "open to the idea" of amending its contract with the government if the latter felt it would be more advantageous to it.

The project is expected to cost around P14 billion.

Sobrepeña said that any plan to re-bid the contract might only delay its implementation.

The extension is expected to raise ridership of the Edsa MRT from the present 300,000 to an estimated 600,000 once the loop is completed, as more destinations will be made accessible to the riding public.

DISCLOSURES

ALLIED Banking Corp. announced the retirement of Peter Favila as director and president of the bank as well as the resignation of Anthony Woo as director. Elected were Panfilo O. Domingo as director and chair and Reynaldo Maclang as director and president. Also elected was Arlene Guevarra as corporate secretary.

* * *

JOLLIBEE Foods Corp. denied it was scouting for firms outside the country.

* * *

BANCO Filipino announced the election of Carmelita Almera as director of the bank in place of Delfin Dimagiba.

* * *

FORUM Pacific Inc. moved its annual stockholders' meeting from Sept. 11 to Sept. 25.

* * *

EAST Asia Power Resources Corp. denied having any knowledge that could explain the unusual downward movement in the price of its stock. ***Compiled by Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research***

Philippine Stock Exchange

(As of Thursday, Aug. 16, 2001)

STOCK	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Bank of the Phil. Islands	63	63.5	63	63	200,600
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	33	33	31.5	31.5	123,900
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	208	209	206	208	41,780
Prudential Bank	420	420	420	420	30
Philippine National Bank	49.5	50	48.5	50	464,200
Phil. Savings Bank	29	29	29	29	1,000
Union Bank of the Phil.	25	25	25	25	500
FINANCIAL SERVICE					
Bankard Inc.	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	10,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1460	1465	1460	1465	490
Sun Life Financial Serv.	1175	1185	1175	1185	2,270
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.5	0.51	0.48	0.51	1,520,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.7	73,000
Piltel	0.5	0.5	0.48	0.48	150,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	575	575	565	565	91,650
Ivantage Corp.	0.77	0.77	0.77	0.77	50,000
Philweb.Com Inc.	0.032	0.032	0.03	0.031	115,400,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	35	35	32.5	32.5	73,700
Manila Electric Co. B	42	42.5	41	42	2,287,900
Petron Corp.	1.88	1.92	1.86	1.9	7,693,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.93	0.93	0.92	0.92	40,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	31,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	2.02	2.04	1.98	1.98	1,469,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.34	0.34	0.33	0.33	60,000
Union Cement Corp.	1.16	1.16	1.16	1.16	216,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Cosmos Bottling Corp.	5.7	5.7	5.7	5.7	930,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	13.5	13.75	13.5	13.75	569,900
La Tondeña Distillers Inc.	25.5	26	25	26	149,500
Pancake House Inc.	1.62	1.62	1.62	1.62	30,000
RFM Corp.	2.38	2.4	2.34	2.34	1,020,000
San Miguel Corp. A	41.5	41.5	41.5	41.5	33,300
San Miguel Corp. B	55.5	55.5	54	54.5	144,300
Vitarich Corp.	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	200,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Ayala Corp.	6.4	6.4	6.3	6.3	640,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	1.62	1.62	1.6	1.6	1,050,000
Alliance Global Group Inc.	11	11	10.75	10.75	900
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	1.02	1.04	1	1.02	983,000
A. Soriano Corp.	0.44	0.44	0.44	0.44	20,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.008	0.008	0.008	0.008	10,000,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.46	0.47	0.45	0.45	1,150,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	1.8	1.82	1.8	1.82	1,583,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	200,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	30,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	100,000
Ebecom Holdings Inc.	0.11	0.11	0.11	0.11	950,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	29.5	29.5	29	29.5	395,400
Global Equities Inc.	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	20,000
Guoco Holdings (Phils.)	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	300,000
Ipeople Inc.	1.12	1.12	1.12	1.12	40,000
Ipeople Inc. B	1.12	1.14	1.12	1.14	60,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	1.94	1.96	1.94	1.96	38,000
Medco Holdings	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	100,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.7	0.7	0.67	0.7	3,770,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.39	0.39	0.38	0.39	560,000
Tanduay Holdings Inc.	5.3	5.3	5.3	5.3	30,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.21	0.225	0.21	0.225	360,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.29	0.29	0.27	0.28	1,920,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Matsushita Elec Phil Corp.	5	5	5	5	8,000
Music Corp.	1.58	1.6	1.56	1.6	386,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.56	0.56	0.56	0.56	40,000
Central Azucar Don Pedro	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	460,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	13.5	14	13.5	13.75	63,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE					
Belle Corp.	0.54	0.54	0.54	0.54	390,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.51	0.52	0.51	0.51	2,140,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	36	36	36	36	62,300
Cosmos Bottling Corp.-Pref.	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	19,000
Equitable PCI Bank-War	1.6	1.6	1.42	1.42	370,000
PNB Warrants	12	12	12	12	1,000
PLDT (10% Pref.) Series U	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	1,300
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	100
PLDT 10% Pref Series Aa	10	10	10	10	6,000
Philweb.Com Inc.-Warrants	0.015	0.015	0.013	0.014	293,000,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	4.9	4.9	4.85	4.9	1,759,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.23	0.23	0.23	0.23	30,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.29	0.3	0.26	0.27	3,000,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.29	0.29	0.28	0.28	1,720,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.94	1.94	1.9	1.9	1,733,000
Primex Corp.	2.5	2.55	2.5	2.55	101,000
Phil Realty and Holdings	0.075	0.075	0.075	0.075	100,000
SM Development Corp.	0.84	0.84	0.84	0.84	20,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	6.5	6.5	6.3	6.5	1,858,000
Urbancorp Realty Dev. Inc.	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32	30,000
MINING					
Dizon Copper Silver Mines	1.7	2	1.7	2	29,000
Itogon-Suyoc Mines A	0.043	0.047	0.042	0.046	201,800,000
Itogon-Suyoc Mines B	0.046	0.046	0.046	0.046	400,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.17	0.17	0.17	0.17	500,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co. B	0.165	0.17	0.165	0.17	1,010,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	220,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	0.018	0.018	0.018	0.018	2,500,000
The Philodrill Corp. B	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	2,970,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.19	0.2	0.19	0.2	150,000

	SHARES	VALUE (P)
Banks & Fin Svc	844,770	51,744,430.00
Comm'l & Ind'l	453,579,250	239,143,100.00
PRO	10,351,000	25,520,960.00
Mining	203,959,000	9,334,700.00
OIL	5,620,000	816,100.00
GRAND TOTALS:	674,388,020	326,647,240.00
AVERAGES		
Banks & Fin Svc	537.06	DOWN 0.30
Comm'l & Ind'l	1,848.15	DOWN 12.48
PRO	515.68	DOWN 0.30
Mining	1,276.43	UP 0.58
OIL	1.69	DOWN 0.02
All Shares Index	772.64	UP 3.10
Composite	1,316.22	DOWN 8.94

NO. OF ADVANCES: 23; NO. OF DECLINES: 32; NO. OF UNCHANGED: 36;
NO. OF TRADED ISSUES: 91; NO. OF TRADES: 2,253

CURRENCIES

Aug. 16, 2001 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Foreign currency in US$	Foreign currency in Peso
United States	Dollar	1.093853	1.000000	50.8310
Japan	Yen	0.009159	0.008373	0.4256
United Kingdom	Pound	1.576679	1.441400	73.2678
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.140418	0.128370	6.5252
Switzerland	Franc	0.658155	0.601685	30.5843
Canada	Dollar	0.716013	0.654579	33.2729
Singapore	Dollar	0.626850	0.573066	29.1295
Australia	Dollar	0.575712	0.526316	26.7532
Bahrain	Dinar	2.901620	2.652661	134.8374
Kuwait	Dinar	N/A	N/A	N/A
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.291694	0.266667	13.5550
Brunei	Dollar	0.620943	0.567666	28.8550
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000126	0.000115	0.0058
Thailand	Baht	0.024390	0.022297	1.1334
UAE	Dirham	0.297890	0.272331	13.8429
Korea	Won	0.000859	0.000785	0.0399
Euro	Euro	1.000000	0.914200	46.4697
Germany	Mark	0.511292	0.467423	23.7596
France	Franc	0.152450	0.139369	7.0843
Netherlands	Guilder	0.453780	0.414846	21.0870
Austria	Schilling	0.072673	0.066438	3.3771
Belgium	Franc	0.024789	0.022662	1.1519
Italy	Lire	0.000516	0.000472	0.0240
Finland	Markka	0.168198	0.153767	7.8161
Portugal	Escudo	0.004988	0.00456	0.2318
Spain	Peseta	0.006010	0.005494	0.2793
Luxemburg	Franc	0.024789	0.022662	1.1519
Ireland	Punt	1.269739	1.160795	59.0044

Keppel loses Subic shipyard

COCKTALES

By Victor C. Agustin

IN an outstanding reversal, the Supreme Court has ordered the Keppel-SM Group consortium to surrender the control of the Philippine Shipyard and Engineering Corp. in Subic in favor of the JG Summit consortium of taipan John Gokongwei Jr., who the high court declared as winner in the 1993 bidding.

The Supreme Court ruled that a shipyard is a public utility and that, wherefore, maximum foreign ownership is constitutionally limited to 40 percent. Keppel, according to an industry estimate, owns more than 90 percent of the Subic shipyard now.

Up until the 1993 bidding, the Subic shipyard was 87.67-percent owned by the government, with the balance, down from the original 40 percent, held by Kawasaki Heavy Industries of Japan.

Despite its minimal equity, Kawasaki was allowed by the Asset Privatization Trust to top by 5 percent the highest bid of P2.03 billion, submitted by JG Summit-Sembawang Shipyard of Singapore-Jurong Shipyard of Malaysia.

Kawasaki's right to top was "exchanged" in 1990 from an original right-of-first refusal provision in the 1977 joint venture agreement between Kawasaki and the government.

Still, the right to top by Kawasaki should have been limited to a maximum of 40 percent of the total capitalization of the shipyard, the Supreme Court ruled.

"While it may be argued that the right to top was aimed at giving the best financial advantage to the government, the manner by which that right was conceived and arrived in this case manifested bias in favor of (Kawasaki), thereby clearly brushing aside the rule on fair competition," the Supreme Court said.

Losers become winners

WORSE, Kawasaki flipped its right to top in favor of losing partner/bidder Philyards, which in turn flipped it over to Kawasaki's losing partners Keppel, SM Group, ICTSI, and Insular Life.

"There is reason, therefore, for the petitioner (JG Summit-Sembawang-Jurong) to complain that the APT made a show of a public bidding in order to elicit the highest bid, only to award the sale to a non-bidder," the Supreme

COCKTALES/ B5

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Napocor's financing needs seen hitting $530M this year

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE SIZE of the National Power Corp.'s financial requirement this year to be financed jointly by the national government and overseas borrowings was raised by 51 percent to $530 million.

Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho said the level of Napocor's financial needs this year could go up to "a little more than $500 million," depending on how the state-run firm could dispose of its assets and postpone some of its payables.

Napocor president Jesus Alcordo said the borrowing needs of the power firm were set at about $350 million.

Camacho, a former secretary of the Department of Energy, said the national government could raise as much as 60 percent of Napocor's borrowing requirement this year while the remaining amount must be obtained by the power firm.

"We can raise between 40 and 60 percent of what Napocor needs. We cannot borrow the entire amount for them because we also observe some prudential limits as to how much we can re-lend to state-owned companies," Camacho, concurrent chair of Napocor, said.

This means the national government can borrow as much as $320 million in behalf of the state-run power firm.

Camacho noted that recent "unsolicited" proposals worth $300 million that the finance department received from two investment banks for new loans might be used for Napocor's requirement.

He said the power firm had also received "interesting offers" from other groups offering financing.

The finance chief said Napocor's borrowing requirement could be reduced to $350 million if it could sell six gas turbines worth about P1.5 billion and if it could postpone payables to the energy department.

Camacho said the government could also opt to include a portion of Napocor's borrowing with the 10-year global bond issue set for next month or with other forthcoming foreign borrowings of the national government.

Napocor's Alcordo earlier said the power firm's board of directors had approved the issuance of about $350 million worth of bonds in the overseas market to finance less than $300 million in maturing debts.

The national government had been borrowing in behalf of the power firm. Last year, the government included in its $1.2-billion global bond issue a $500-million borrowing for Napocor.

Metro Pacific income down in first half

METRO Pacific Corp. today has reported a steep drop in its unaudited consolidated operating income in the first half of the year.

The company reported that its operating income fell to P573 million from January to June this year, down from the first half of the year compared with P1.50 billion during the same period in 2000 last year.

It said the decline was primarily the result of a P1.42- billion reduction in its consolidated revenues following the completion of the "Big Delta" at the Bonifacio Global City in April 2000 and the resultant full recognition of revenues in respect of the 1996 land sales of Fort Bonifacio Development Corp. (FBDC).

Partially offsetting this were increased higher sales of Pacific Plaza Towers units and a 14-percent reduction in the consolidated cost of sales.

Malampaya savings seen at $7.8B

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE GOVERNMENT stands to save at least $7.8 billion from the Malampaya natural gas-to-power project over the next 20 years on top of $9 billion in projected royalties, according to Energy Secretary Vicente Perez Jr.

In a forum, Perez told members of the Foreign Chambers of the Philippines that the figure included $4.5 billion in foreign exchange savings from displaced oil imports.

He said the government would also save $2.2 billion for the cheaper fuel and free itself from $1.1 billion worth of environment-related costs.

"We have not included (these projected savings) in the national budget deficit forecast of P135 billion for 2002," he said.

Perez explained that the government would get as much as $350 million a year in royalties from the Malampaya project.

"But in the first six years, while the project consortium is recovering its capital expenditures, government revenue would be about $125 million a year," he said.

He stressed, however, that the figures were all projections made based on current prices of crude and rate of inflation.

"These are subject to change," he said.

Perez said the government would start collecting revenues by next year, when the downstream part of the project was expected to start running.

Natural gas is expected to flow from the Malampaya offshore wells northwest of Palawan beginning October.

The natural gas will be used to fuel three new power plants in Batangas that have a total capacity of 2,700 megawatts.

These are First Gas Holdings Corp.'s 1,000-mw Sta. Rita and 500-mw San Lorenzo plants, and Kepco-Ilijan Power Corp.'s 1,200 -mw generator in Ilijan.

The Malampaya gas field, situated about 50 kilometers northwest of Palawan, is expected to yield 2.6 trillion cubic feet of natural gas.

Shell Philippines Exploration BV, the project operator, and Texaco Philippines each has a 45-percent stake in the venture, while PNOC Exploration Co. has a 10-percent share.

Total project cost was pegged at $4.5 billion.

The Malampaya consortium is also considering parallel developments in the downstream sector of the natural gas industry, where the gas would be used for other purposes aside from power generation.

Unions and strikes in government

LABOR MANAGEMENT FORUM

Josephus B. Jimenez

WHICH is more important: the need for good public service or the right of civil servants to join unions and to strike? Which should command the greater weight in the nation's hierarchy of values: the right of the millions of SSS members and retirees to high quality service or the SSS employees' right to concerted action?

The ouster of Nañagas from the SSS, the ongoing noise barrage at the MWSS, the union agitation at the BIR, the concerted activities at the DECS and the DOT—all these put into focus the need to take a closer look at Executive Order No. 180, the law that grants government employees the right to self-organization.

From the viewpoint of the Philippine Labor movement, one of the milestone achievements of President Cory Aquino's administration was the granting of the right to unionize to government employees. This was not only provided by law, through EO 80, which was issued by President Aquino under the Freedom Constitution, it was also enshrined in the 1987 Constitution.

Constitution and law

The 1987 Bill of Rights specifies in its Section 8 that: "The right of the people, including those employed in public and private sectors, to form unions, associations or societies for purposes not contrary to law shall not be abridged." But even before the approval of the 1987 Charter, President Aquino legislated the public sector's right to self-organization.

Sec. 2 of EO 180 provides: "All government employees can form, join or assist employees' organization of their own choosing for the furtherance and protection of their interests. They can also form xxx labor-management committees, work councils and other form of workers' participation schemes to achieve the same objectives."

Unfair labor practices prohibited

The law also prohibits government administrators, directors and chiefs from committing acts of discrimination against government employees on matters regarding their employment by reason of their membership in employees' unions. The law also prohibits yellow dog contracts or agreements requiring job applicants to commit, as a condition to their hiring, not to join unions or the resign from such organizations if they are already affiliated with them.

In fact, authorities in government are not allowed to interfere in the establishment of unions and in the functioning or administration of union affairs. They are not supposed to have a hand in the formation of said organization or help any candidate in the union elections. The law wants these authorities to be completely shut off from union affairs.

Union registration

All unions in the government are required to register with the DOLE and the Civil Service Commission. Processing of the said registration should be done by the Bureau of Labor Relations or the appropriate regional offices of the DOLE, in accordance with the rules and procedures set forth by the Labor Code.

Once the application for registration is approved, a certificate will be issued to evidence the acquired juridical personality of the unions. As such, the unions will be vested with all the powers, rights and privileges including the right to sue and be sued, to own properties and to be exempt from all forms of taxation.

Bargaining agent

The registered union that enjoys the majority support of the employees in the appropriate organizational unit will be designated as the sole and exclusive representative of the employees. Voluntary recognition should be granted to a union if there is no other group seeking registration.

A certification election shall be conducted if there are two or more duly registered employees' organizations in the appropriate organizational unit. And the winner shall be certified as the exclusive bargaining agent of the rank-and-file employees.

Negotiations and strikes

The law also allows collective negotiations of all terms and conditions of employment including those that are provided by law like salary levels and position classifications, and the benefits provided by law.

EO 180 does not explicitly prohibit strikes and other forms of concerted activities in government. In fact Sec. 14 of the law provides: "The Civil Service and rules governing concerted activities and strikes in the government service shall be observed, subject to any legislation that may be enacted by Congress."

There are unions in government financial institutions and government-owned and controlled corporations—those with original charters and those that were organized only by virtue of the Private Corporation Code. In one case involving the Bliss Development Corp., the Supreme Court held that, since it has no original charter, unions are allowed all the rights under the Labor Code.

Strikes prohibited

The Supreme Court however held that strikes among government employees are illegal. In the case filed by the public school teachers who were dismissed by then Education Secretary Isidro Cariño, the Court declared the dismissal legal.

It thus appears that while the law allows unions and negotiations and even some participation by the workers in decision and policy-making, strikes are banned because it is imperative that public service should not be jeopardized.

While unions are allowed, any concerted activity that may paralyze, delay or sabotage the quality of services in government should not be tolerated. The SSS employees have a lot of explaining to do. In fact, the new SSS Administrator has vowed to pursue an investigation of the employees and a case has already been lodged against them by SSS retirees.

Well, as the sage said: "Your right to swing your arms ends where my nose begins." Unions in government should enhance and not derail public interests.

(For comments, you can reach the writer at the following e-mail address: josephus.jimenez@pcppi.com.ph.)

PSBank income up 73%

THE PHILIPPINE Savings Bank has reported a net income of P78.5 million in the first six months of the year, up 73 percent from the figure posted in the same period last year.

"The encouraging first-semester result puts well within targets for the year," PSBank president Arthur Ty said.

Ty credited the bank's strong performance to a substantial improvement in net interest income resulting from a favorable shift in deposit mix in favor of lower costing funds.

Deposit portfolio moved up by P451 million in the first half of the year to P13.691 billion. Net interest income was up by P116.8 million compared with that of the same period last year.

Income on loans kept its upward pace as the loan portfolio steadily rose while loan-loss reserves were aggressively managed in view of economic uncertainties.

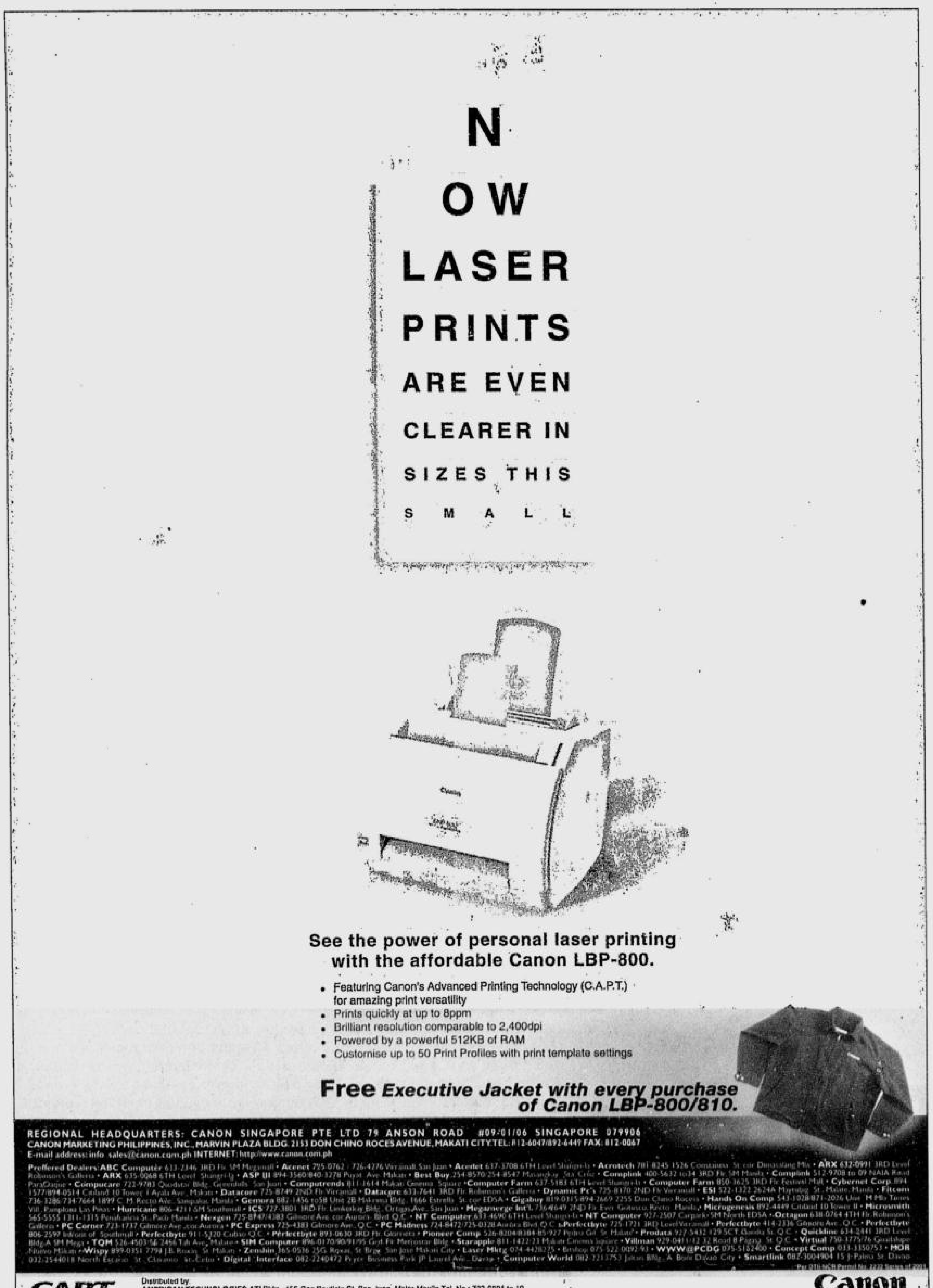
Net loan portfolio was up by P42 million despite aggressive loan-loss provisioning. Provisions amounted to an additional P86 million for the first semester, up by 165.6 percent from the year-ago level.

PSBank's total resources of P18.987 billion also registered an increase of P182.8 million compared with end-2000 level.

Investments and trading account securities of P1.674 billion grew by P350 million due to increased trading activity.

PSBank's capital stands at P3.931 billion, which is substantially higher than required capitalization for thrift banks.

Ty says, "for the rest of the year, we will keep focused on managing our margins as well as our non-interest income. Simultaneously, we will aggressively pursue other initiative aimed at expanding our consumer business and improving service delivery."



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Peso seen to sustain rebound, to hit 50:$1

BUENAVENTURA

By Clarissa S. Batino

PART of it was seasonal, part of it regional and global, and, of course, a big part was the local peace and order problem. Almost everybody pointed to these as the factors that ganged up on the peso.

And as bets were laid, prophecies, mostly against the peso, became more and more self-fulfilling, especially from mid-June to mid-July, when the local currency was most volatile.

Obviously unhappy with the situation, particularly when the peso sank to 54.335 to a dollar, reminiscent of former President Estrada's last days when the currency closed at a historic low of 54.79 and slid to a record intra-day level of 55.75, Malacañang decided to do something quickly.

War vs speculators

President Macapagal-Arroyo declared war against speculators and began talking the peso up, saying the currency's real value was at 50 to a dollar.

Ms Macapagal ordered the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas and the Department of Finance to crack down on speculators, and even hinted at imposing currency controls similar to those used by Malaysia in 1998 when it nailed the ringgit to 3.9 to a dollar.

The President said she admired how Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad handled the currency problem and that a currency control remained an option for the Philippines.

BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura and Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho both believe the Philippines does not need currency controls at this time.

Bankers and traders feel that even without the "psychological impact" of currency controls, the peso can recover to 50 to a dollar by the end of the year.

Key factors

For Buenaventura, the conditions that will spur the peso's rebound are the recovery of the export sector, expansion of the domestic eco-nomy, and fiscal discipline to keep the budget deficit below P145 billion.

"The macroeconomic environment must improve, including peace and order concerns. With the conditions mentioned by the governor, I don't see any reason why the peso won't hit 50 by yearend," BSP Deputy Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. said.

Michaelangelo Aguilar, treasury head of Standard Chartered Bank, said "it is possible for the peso to hit 50 by December." He said he expected families of Filipino overseas contract workers to convert about $1 billion in remittance during the last two months of the year in time for the Christmas holidays.

This much foreign exchange, equivalent to about P50 billion, is enough to address a dollar-supply problem in the spot market that has been pulling the peso down in the last three months.

Aguilar says once the peso crosses the 53-to-a-dollar level and recovers to 52, the one-way bet against the local currency will end. "Once the bet is off, that's where the true recovery starts," he says.

Swift moves

On Aug. 9, the central bank raised the banks' reserve requirements by another two percentage points to 20 percent following a two-percentage-point-hike implemented in late July.

That same day, the central bank did the unexpected and published the names of nine big banks it found to have violated its foreign exchange regulations and helped speculate against the peso in June and July.

From 53 to a dollar on Aug. 9, the peso bounced back to 51.85 the next day.

For Jaime Panganiban, executive vice president of Rizal Commercial Banking Corp., the resolution of the Abu Sayyaf hostage crisis and kidnap-for-ransom cases in Metro Manila will help the peso recover to 50 in 12 months.

"It was the uncertainty and liquidity issues that caused the peso's fall. Once these issues are addressed, then the recovery will happen naturally," he said.

Exporters also believe the peso's true value is as high as 49 to a dollar.

Brighter prospects

Sergio Ortiz-Luis, president of the Philippine Exporters Confederation Inc., has ruled out the possibility of the peso hitting 55 to 60.

Exporters are among those who gain when the peso depreciates, but Ortiz-Luis insists that his group does not rejoice whenever the local currency falls.

"While we can't deny that we are more competitive now than Taiwan in terms of exports like food and IT because their exchange rate is stronger, we do not like our currency to weaken and stay volatile," he says.

He believes exports will post a dramatic recovery and post a 5-percent growth next year from a flat growth this year.

If economic conditions improve, a bullish forecast of University of Asia and the Pacific economist and "prophet of boom" Bernardo Villegas said that the peso will hit 47 to a dollar in the next six months may actually come true.

Tariff cut on raw materials to 1% likely, Finance says

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE DEPARTMENT of Finance is willing to cut duties on raw and semi-processed raw materials not available locally down to one percent from 3 percent and only on limited products.

In a meeting between DOF officials led by Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho and the Federation of Philippine Industries, Finance Undersecretary Cornelio Gison said the government could not accede to the businessmen's request for the grant of duty-free status on raw and semi-processed materials because of its impact on government revenues.

The DOF estimated that the government would forego roughly P1.2 billion in potential revenues if the 3-percent duty would be reduced to zero. The DOF said it was amenable to a tariff reduction to one percent just to cover the cost of regulation and to minimize foregone revenues to P800 million.

The DOF said that duty-free status would only be limited initially to capital equipment imports of export enterprises and that the granting of zero duty in the future would be made on a case-to-case basis.

he DOF disappointed the FPI members who noted that the zero-duty proposal was one of the major recommendations made by the business sector to President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Earlier, Trade Secretary Manuel "Mar" Roxas II said the Cabinet-level Tariff and Related Matters (TRM) have agreed in principle to approve the proposal pending a more thorough review on the waiver of duties impact on the government's tax collection efforts. Roxas said the TRM consider the zero duties as a bold measure as part of government's continuing efforts to lower the cost of doing business in the country.

The FPI is pushing for zero duties in order to generate significant savings from the waiver on duties of their raw and semi-processed materials. It said there should be no duties on these materials since there were no local industries to protect.

Philippine AXA Life introduces Star Dollar to the market

With many of the world's currencies and businesses heavily dependent on the strength of the dollar, it's about time you made your dollars work for you as well.

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"Star Dollar is indeed the best way to make your dollars work harder while getting the benefits and security of a life insurance policy," says new Philippine AXA Life President Victor Quisumbing.

Philippine AXA Life is a partnership between two financial giants: Metrobank, the country's No.1 bank, and the Global AXA Group, the world's largest insurer (as affirmed for three consecutive years in Fortune Magazine's Global 500).

For inquiries about Star Dollar, call the Philippine AXA Life Customer Service Hotline at 810-1394.

ODA projects worth $600M shelved

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE MACAPAGAL administration has cancelled $600 million worth of foreign-assisted projects this year as it instructed the inter-agency Investment Coordinating Council to tighten the monitoring of slow-moving projects to be financed by official development assistance or ODA.

Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho said the ICC, which he heads, had issued a circular providing for the cancellation of projects that have not progressed 18 months after approval.

"The ICC approval of a given project shall have a validity period of 18 months. Beyond which, a project will need an ICC review prior to implementation," the circular said.

Camacho noted that the inter-agency body might also prescribe a shorter validity period of any approval.

In the first semester, the government had implemented ODA-funded projects worth $413 million, lower than the target of $502 million. Still, the finance secretary said the utilization rate of the foreign funding had increased to 82 percent in the first six months of the year.

The country's official development assistance comes mainly from the Japan Bank of International Cooperation, the Asian Development Bank, and the World Bank.

While these foreign funds offer lower interest rates and softer terms, they require the payment of a commitment fee equivalent to a little less than one percent of the total project cost.

By canceling $600 million worth of ODA projects, the government was able to save P23 million in commitment fees, said Camacho.

The Macapagal administration has doubled its counterpart funding target for ODA projects to P52.4 billion next year from this year's P26 billion.

"We have to cancel facilities we are not utilizing and review projects that have been dormant. We have to do this so projects will move more efficiently and we won't be wasting money on fees," Camacho said.

Finance Undersecretary Juanita Amatong has been undertaking an inventory of existing foreign aids and borrowings.

She said the inventory was necessary to avoid duplication of program loans being obtained from multilateral creditors like the World Bank, the ADB, and the Japan Bank.

Amatong said she has discovered "several duplications in program loans" already.

The review, she noted, will also help the government in pursuing any program loans in the future.

Cocktales . . .

(From page B3)

Court said.

Even worse, the government's APT violated the Constitution when its bidding rules allowed foreign corporations to operate a public utility without setting a period within which a winning foreign bidder should name its local nominee, the court said.

The Supreme Court also noted that the Commission on Audit did not approve the specific bidding rules, particularly the provision on the right to top the highest bidder. Nowhere was a COA official present during the 1993 bidding.

"Likewise, nowhere in the record is it stated that the APT heeded the suggestion of (then) Secretary of Finance and COP (Committee on Privatization) Chairman (Vicente) Jayme that its decision to grant Kawasaki the right to top the highest bid be made 'known to the Commission on Audit'."

The Supreme Court decision, in effect, reversed the "grievously erred" ruling made by Court of Appeals Justices Alicia Martinez, Ricardo Galvez, and Ruben Reyes, who, in turn, upheld the original findings of the Makati Regional Trial Court.

The Supreme Court decision was handed down, unanimously, by its First Division, composed of Consuelo Yñares-Santiago (ponente), Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr., Reynato Puno, Santiago Kapunan, and Bernardo Pardo.

Although promulgated way back on Nov. 20, 2000, the ruling has apparently not been made public—the judgment was still not disclosed in the Supreme Court website as of yesterday—pending an appeal by the Keppel consortium.

The Keppel consortium is represented by Sycip Salazar Hernandez & Gatmaitan; the JG Summit group, by Romulo Mabanta Buenaventura Sayoc and Delos Angeles.

JG Summit's partner, Sembawang, is ironically a sister company of Keppel, both being owned by the Singapore government holding company, Temasek.

Heard through the grapevine

TRANSPORTATION Secretary Pantaleon Alvarez is finally meeting on Monday the local oppositors to the German-led group that is building the new Naia Terminal 3. Alvarez will be furnishing the local cargo handlers the Erap-amended Terminal 3 contract that the oppositors have long been demanding.

(Cocktales may be reached by e-mail at cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com or at cocktales_pdi@hotmail.com.)

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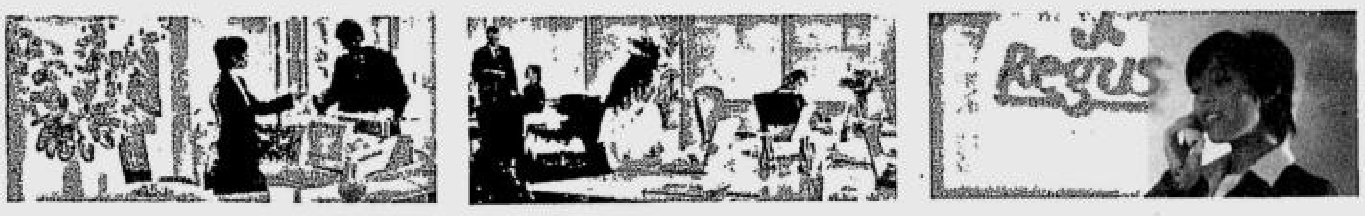

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BREATHING ROOM

Revised GDP shows Japan skips recession

TOKYO—Japan's government got some breathing room on Thursday after revised gross domestic product data showed that the struggling economy managed to escape recession—at least for a little longer.

But virtually no one saw the numbers as any real good news for the economy, with a string of more recent economic figures showing that another downturn was almost inevitable.

GDP for the January-March quarter was revised upward to show growth of a real 0.1 percent from the previous quarter, compared with a 0.2-percent drop in the initial estimate released in June.

"For all practical purposes, Japan is in recession," said Ron Leven, a strategist at Lehman Brothers in Tokyo. "The next quarter is looking like GDP will shrink quite a lot, so it's hard to see this as a meaningful change in the outlook on Japan."

The unusually large revision was the first that pulled GDP into positive territory from negative since 1994. But economists said the change was a near certainty after the government revised up figures on spending by single-person households last week.

Single households contribute about 13 percent to overall consumer spending—an area that represented the lion's share, or about 60 percent, of Japan's GDP. The government rejigged the formula for single households to reduce volatility in the data.

Economists saw the overall change as minor, saying it did little to alter a picture of an economy hamstrung by rising bankruptcies, dwindling industrial output, sour bank loans, flagging exports and steady declines in consumer prices.

"It's not just history. It's ancient history," said Richard Jerram, chief economist at ING Baring Securities. "Too much has changed since the first quarter for this to be at all reassuring."

But the new growth figures could give Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi some space to maneuver as he tries to push through reforms in the budget for the fiscal year starting next April despite criticism that a belt-tightening could exacerbate Japan's economic problems.

Financial markets paid little attention, turning instead to worries over the US economy that were pressuring the dollar against the yen. Tokyo stocks stumbled 2 percent in early trade, but this was due mostly to nagging uncertainties over global high-tech earnings.

"This is an old number, and stock market participants are not really paying much attention to it," said Nobuaki Kurisu, chief fund manager at Sumisei Global Investment Management.

The mildly positive news comes just days after the Bank of Japan decided to pump more liquidity into the economy to expand its quantitative easing measures that have driven short-term interest rates effectively to zero.

Nonetheless, economists said the revision did not change the fact that the economy remained essentially stagnant.

A contraction in GDP data for April-June, due for release on Sept. 7, still looked inevitable but the revision meant two consecutive quarters of shrinking GDP—the commonly used definition of recession—would be avoidable for now.

But if April-June GDP shrinks and this is followed by another contraction in July to September—as many economists expect—Japan's struggling economy could again find itself technically in recession, its fourth in a decade.

"Growth is way below potential, unemployment is near highs, so it's hard to make a terribly positive story out of this," said Leven at Lehman Brothers.

GDP growth for the fiscal year that ended in March was also nudged higher to one percent from a preliminary 0.9 percent.

The data, released by the Cabinet Office, showed personal consumption up a revised 0.6 percent in January to March, from a preliminary estimate of flat growth, and the government said the gain was mostly due to single-household spending.

Single households account for 15 to 20 percent of overall personal spending—long the biggest but weakest component in the world's second-largest economy.

"This is what we had been expecting after changes to the single-household data. The original figure looked a bit too weak to start with, relative to real economic conditions," said Tomoaki Shishido, economist at Nomura Research Institute.

Reuters

A YOUNG father and his son pass by an electronic board in downtown Tokyo. Tokyo stocks fell sharply in morning trading on Thursday, with market sentiment dampened by declines in US stocks and the dollar. The benchmark 225-issue Nikkei Stock Average fell 250.67 points, or 2.13 percent, ending the morning session at 11,504.73.

AP

Asian firms suffer high-tech slump

TOKYO—Asian information technology firms suffered steep profit slumps in the April-June quarter, but China weathered the tough economic conditions, thanks to major cost cutting efforts, a daily said Thursday.

An economic slowdown in the United States, Japan and Europe hit Asia's leading high-tech firms, according to figures from 12 major non-Japanese firms compiled by the Nihon Keizai newspaper.

Sluggish demand in the global market took its toll on Asian manufacturers, where more than 50 percent of the world's semiconductor and electronic parts are made, the business daily said.

Until late last year, Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Co. managed to maintain 100 percent production capacity, but this figure plunged to 44 percent by the three months to June and is expected to slip below 40 percent in the current quarter, the daily said.

Sales sank 60 percent at Malaysia's Unisem Bhd. in April-June and the firm posted its first earnings loss over the period since going public in 1998.

Barry Waite, president and chief executive officer of Singapore's Chartered Semiconductor Manufacturing Ltd., a semiconductor foundry, said the industry was experiencing an unprecedented slowdown.

He predicted this year would be the worst year for information technology manufacturers.

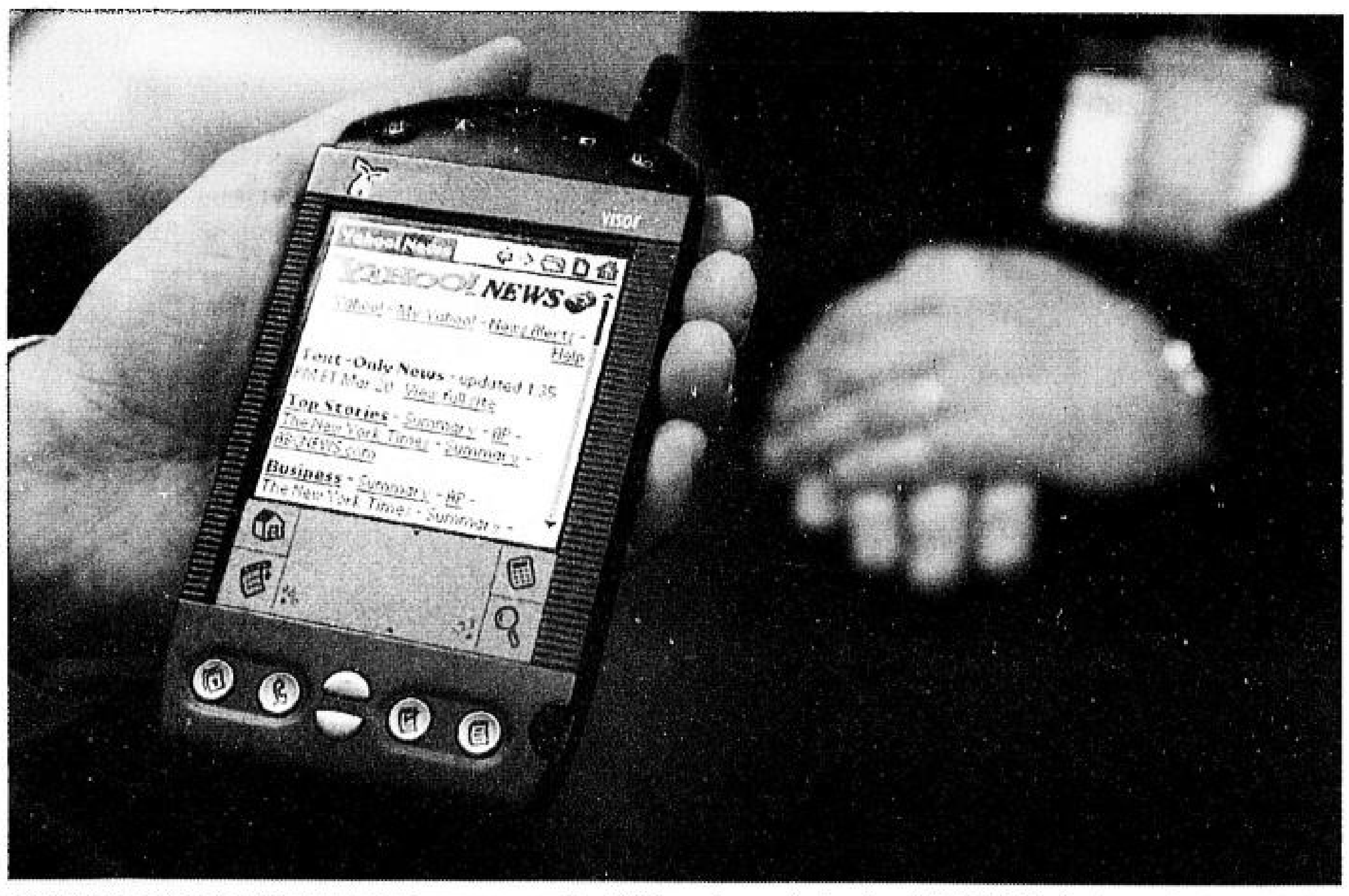
South Korea's Samsung Electro-Mechanics Co., whose profits have plunged by 50 percent, will terminate 13 unprofitable businesses that make up an aggregate 16 percent of its total sales.

In contrast, Chinese firms are doing much better. China's largest personal computer manufacturer, Legend Holdings Ltd., had said net profits grew 40 percent in the April-June quarter from last year.

The volume of computer sales rose 28 percent, down from the 77-percent increase enjoyed in fiscal 2000, but lower costs, such as prices for parts, helped boost profit.

China's mobile phone giant TCL told the Nihon Keizai that its sales of cellular phones in the April-June quarter soared to 150,000 units—5.5 times as many as the same period last year.

AFP



TODD Antes, vice president of product management for AirPrime, demonstrates the digital CDMA wireless springboard during the Cellular Telecommunications and Internet Association convention at the Sands Expo and Venetian Hotel in Las Vegas. Rogue nations and foreign terrorists aren't the only ones causing heartburn at the Pentagon. Some of its most ardent adversaries are homegrown Americans who have become insatiable gadget-happy consumers.

AP

Asian bank customers prefer human touch to technology

SINGAPORE—Most Asian bank customers still prefer the warmth of human contact despite the increasing range of services being offered through the Internet and telephone.

Three out of four respondents polled in the region continued to have "face-to-face interactions with their bank's representatives," global payments group MasterCard International said in a statement.

It polled nearly 5,500 respondents from 13 Asia-Pacific markets in June and found that after face-to-face contact, the most common methods of dealing with banks, in descending order, were telephone transactions, the Internet and regular mail or faxing.

"Despite the influx of modern technology, it's interesting to note that consumers still prefer face-to-face interactions with representatives from banks for more important transactions," said Stuart McDonald, MasterCard International's vice president for corporate services in the region.

"Modern technology just cannot replace the human touch," he added.

Face-to-face contact is the preferred banking method among 87 percent of respondents in China and Thailand, followed by Malaysia at 86 percent, South Korea at 85 percent and Indonesia at 81 percent.

Regionwide, only 17 percent of respondents picked the Internet as the most common mode of interaction with their banks, but this was much higher than regular mail or faxes, which only 7 percent preferred.

Usage of Internet banking was higher in places such as hi-tech Singapore and South Korea at 37 percent, followed by India at 32 percent.

Telephone transactions are popular in Indonesia at 65 percent, Singapore and South Korea at 51 percent and New Zealand at 48 percent.

At the regional level, MasterCard found that most respondents prefer to lodge complaints in person, while the telephone is more widely used for reporting a lost or stolen card or checking account balances.

Some consumers do not scrutinize or even check their monthly bank statements. The survey revealed that regionwide, a noteworthy 29 percent of respondents said they do not inspect their banks' monthly reports.

This was particularly high in China where approximately 58 percent of respondents do not go through their bank statements, followed by 40 percent in Singapore and 33 percent in Korea.

On the other hand, 88 percent of consumers in Indonesia, 87 percent in India and 79 percent in Malaysia make it a point to comb through their monthly bank statements.

Across the region, 54 percent of respondents think that banks almost never commit errors on monthly statements.

In China, fully 76 percent of respondents believe banks almost never make mistakes on bank statements. Similar results are evident in South Korea and Japan.

The survey covered Australia, China, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Japan, South Korea, Malaysia, New Zealand, Philippines, Singapore, Taiwan and Thailand.

AFP

Japan firms to build Thai power plant

TOKYO—Two Japanese trading houses and an electric company agreed Thursday to develop the world's largest power plant in Thailand to meet a surge in demand there.

Chubu Electric Power Co. and trading firm Toyota Tsusho Corp. joined forces with commercial house Tomen Corp. to invest in Union Power Development Co. Ltd., which was contracted to build and operate the huge plant.

"It is the first time Tomen, Toyota Tsusho and Chubu Electric have joined forces on a project," said spokesperson for Japan's No. 3 electricity firm Hideo Nakanishi. "And it is the first time for our company to develop a power plant abroad."

The trio along with Saha Union Group of Thailand and other investors will pay around $306 million to build the 1,400 megawatt coal-fired plant in the Hin Krut district 380 kilometers southwest of Bangkok.

Construction is due to start in April 2002, with operations set to begin in October 2005.

AFP

South Korean gov't offers tax cuts

SEOUL—The South Korean government on Thursday promised tax cuts as the global slowdown put the brakes on the economy by weakening consumption, pushing up unemployment and eroding company earnings.

The tax cut offered by Lee Ki-Ho, a top policymaker in the presidential office, followed calls by the central bank and economists for government steps to boost consumption.

Lee said the government planned to cut income and local taxes by more than 10 percent for 6 million wage earners and self-employed businessmen, along with other measures to stimulate business. The cuts would be worth 650 billion won ($507 million).

"The government plans to increase consumption by promoting research and development, and facility investments," Lee said.

With the US and Japanese economies in the doldrums, South Korea's industrial output and exports have fallen heavily this year.

After gross domestic product growth of 11 percent in 1999 and 9 percent in 2000, many analysts say South Korea will struggle this year to top 4 percent.

The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development warned recently that the South Korean economy had lost steam and forecast GDP growth of 4.25 percent this year and 5.5 percent in 2002.

AFP

Sony aims to become No. 1 LCD maker

TOKYO—Japan's Sony Corp. would start producing liquid crystal display projectors overseas in a bid to become the world's No. 1 producer, a spokesperson said Thursday.

"Sony currently has 20 to 25 percent of the global market, and we are now planning to boost it to as high as 35 percent by the year 2003,' making it the world's largest maker of LCD projectors, said Yuriko Nakatani, spokesperson for the consumer electronics giant.

The firm would begin making LCD projectors, used in computer displays and video conferencing, in Europe and was considering similar projects in the United States and China, she said.

Production would start at a facility in Barcelona, Spain, by the end of this year to cater for the European market, the spokesperson said.

"The plant will produce all the necessary parts for LCD projectors, except a key display component to be exported from Japan," she said.

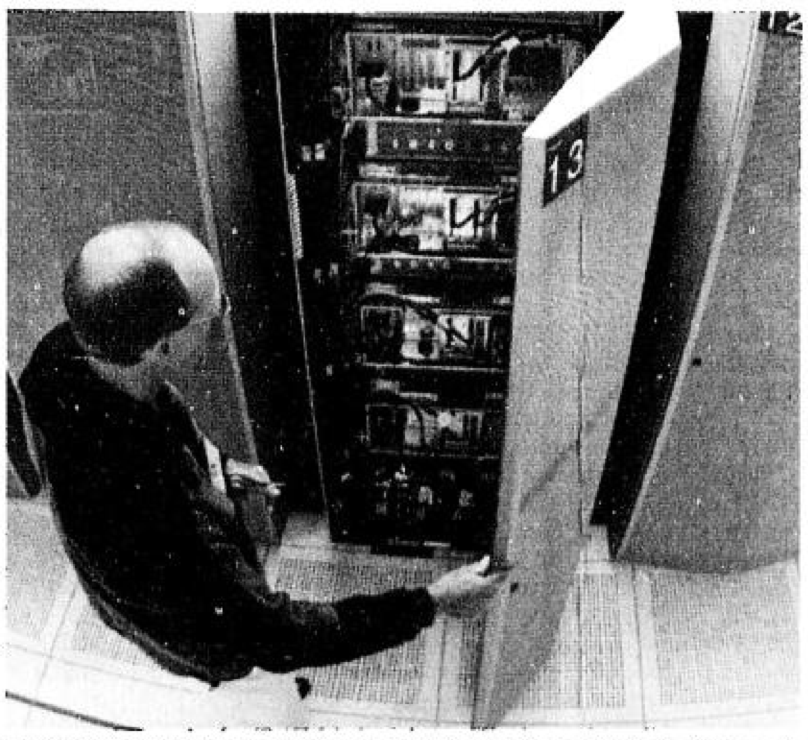
Sony aims to sell 100,000 LCD projectors in Europe in the year to March 2002, she said.

"We are also considering producing LCD projectors in the United States and China," Nakatani said. "But we have not decided on further details."

The Nihon Keizai newspaper said Sony would begin production by the end of 2002 in the two countries.

The global market for the product, now the most widely used projector type, is expected to reach 1.4 million units in 2001 and 3 million in 2003.

AFP



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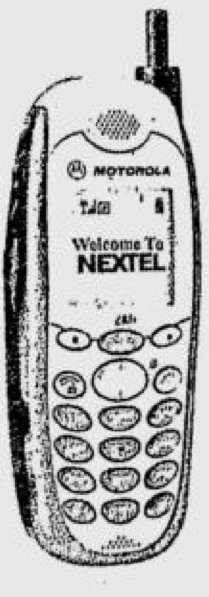

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LEGAL NOTICE

NOTICE is given that the estate of the late **Sinforoso V. Sanchez, Jr.** has been extrajudicially settled by his heirs on August 1, 2001 under Doc#107; Page#23; Book#XLVIII; Series of 2001 before Not. Pub. Atty. Henry B. Adasa of Mla., M.M.
(PDI-Aug. 3, 10 & 17, 2001)

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late DIONISIO S. BODOSO has been extrajudicially settled among his heirs before Notary Public Harold Elmo O. Banzuela of Pasig City on 6/25/01 w/ Doc#488 Page#98 Book I Series of 2001 PDI 8/3,10,17,2001

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late JOSE ABAD had been extrajudicially settled through a Deed of Extrajudicial Settlement with the sale executed on Aug. 19, 1999, in San Antonio, Zambales, duly notarized on same date before Atty. Germana Antipolo-Bactan, a notary public for and in San Antonio, Zambales, and entered in her Notarial Register as Doc. No. 165, Page No. 34, Book No. XIX, Series of 1999.
(PDI-Aug. 10,17 & 2, 2001)

NOTICE OF LOSS

Notice is given on the loss of the following PETRON CORP. Stock Cert. SN's 108114, 774150, 1303605, 1519949, 421473, 774148, 1303604 and 1519947 under the name of RICO M. DAKIS or HILDA P. DAKIS were lost.
(PDI-Aug. 3, 10 & 17, 2001)

NOTICE is hereby given that **EQUITABLE-PCI BANK** Stck Certs. # 2916 (353 shrs), 10235 (141 shrs) and 15810 (144 shrs) legally and lawfully issued to DONNA T. CANCIO were lost as acknowledged by Atty. Constantino L. Reyes Not. Public in and for QC, Doc.#231, Page# 47, Bk#2 Series of 2001.
(PDI-Aug. 17, 24 & 31, 2001)

PERSONAL

PRAYER TO THE HOLY SPIRIT
Holy Spirit Thou who make me see everything and show me the way to reach my ideal. You who give me the divine gift to forgive and forget the wrong that is done to me and who are in all instances of my life with me. I, in this short dialogue, want to thank You for everything and confirm once more that I never want to be separated from You no matter how great the material desires may be. I want to be with You and my loved ones in Your perpetual glory. Amen. -BOY OFFIE

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION & COMMUNICATIONS
LAND TRANSPORTATION OFFICE
East Avenue, Quezon City

MEMORANDUM CIRCULAR NO. EMA-MC-01340
25 April 2001

TO : All Regional Directors, Assistant Regional Directors, Heads Licensing Centers/District Offices and All Employees Concerned

SUBJECT : APPLICATION FOR DUPLICATE OFFICIAL RECEIPT STUDENT PERMIT AND TEMPORARY DRIVER'S LICENSE

In line with the computerization program of the Office, a new system for the licensing transactions have been introduced wherein a Student Permit Card and a Temporary Driver's License will be issued to applicants together with the Official Receipt. Due to these changes, the Official Receipt and the Student Permit Card or the Temporary Driver's License will not be valid if anyone of them is missing.

In this connection, the following guidelines shall be followed for application for duplicate official receipt, student permit and temporary driver's license, in case of loss thereof:

1. If the official receipt of either the student permit or driver's license was lost
   Requirement:
   1. Affidavit of loss
   2. P30.00 - certification fee
      P30.00 - duplicate fee
   Procedure:
   1. Surrender the Student Permit card or the Temporary Driver's License
   2. Issue duplicate official receipt together with the Student Permit card or Temporary Driver's License marked "C2"
2. If the Student Permit card or the Temporary Driver's License was lost
   Requirement:
   1. Affidavit of loss
   2. P30.00 - certification fee
      P30.00 - duplicate fee
   2. Issue official receipt together with the duplicate Student Permit card or Temporary Driver's License marked "C2"
3. If all of (1) and (2) were lost:
   Requirement:
   1. Affidavit of loss
   2. P30.00 - certification fee
      P30.00 - duplicate fee
   Procedure:
   1. Issue duplicate official receipt together with the duplicate Student Permit card or Temporary Driver's License marked "C2"

Since the Driver's License Database is linked with the LETAS database, there is no need to require the LETAS Clearance but instead require the applicant to settle his/her apprehension at the LETAS if the "ALARM" syntax appear in the record of the applicant.

All orders/memoranda in conflict herewith are deemed superseded.

This order shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication to newspapers of general circulation.

(Sgd.) **EDGARDO M. ABENINA**
B/Gen. AFP (Ret.)
Assistant Secretary

Approved:
(Sgd.) ARTURO T. VALDEZ
Undersecretary for Transportation

(PDI – Aug. 17, 2001)

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REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
REGIONAL TRIAL COURT
NATIONAL CAPITAL JUDICIAL REGION
BRANCH 5, MANILA

IN THE MATTER OF THE ADOPTION OF
MINOR KATHRYN DE JESUS DUNTON

Sp. Proc. No. 01-101376

SPS. MICHAEL LE ROY JOHNSON
and GINA SARMIENTO JOHNSON
Petitioner.
x---x

ORDER

In a verified petition filed with this Court by petitioner, SPS. MICHAEL LE ROY JOHNSON and GINA SARMIENTO JOHNSON, through counsel, they pray that after due notice, publication, and hearing, judgment be rendered granting the adoption of the minor KATHRYN DE JESUS DUNTON.

Finding the petition to be sufficient in form and substance, this Court hereby sets the initial hearing of this petition on September 12, 2001 at 8:30 in the morning, at which time and date, all interested parties are cited to appear and show cause if any why the petition should not be granted.

Let a copy of this Order be published at the expense of the petitioners in a newspaper published, edited, and of general circulation within Metro Manila once a week for three (3) consecutive weeks, and a copy of this Order with the petition be served upon the Office of the Solicitor General, Office of the City Prosecutor of Manila and the DSWD-NCR. The Department of Social Welfare and Development-NCR is hereby directed to conduct a Social Case Study as required by law for a period of one (1) month upon receipt of this Order and to submit to this Court the Child Study and Home Study reports and their recommendation on the matter at least one week before the scheduled date of hearing.

SO ORDERED.
Manila, August 1, 2001

(Sgd.) AMALIA R. ANDRADE
Judge

(PDI – Aug. 17, 24 & 31, 2001)

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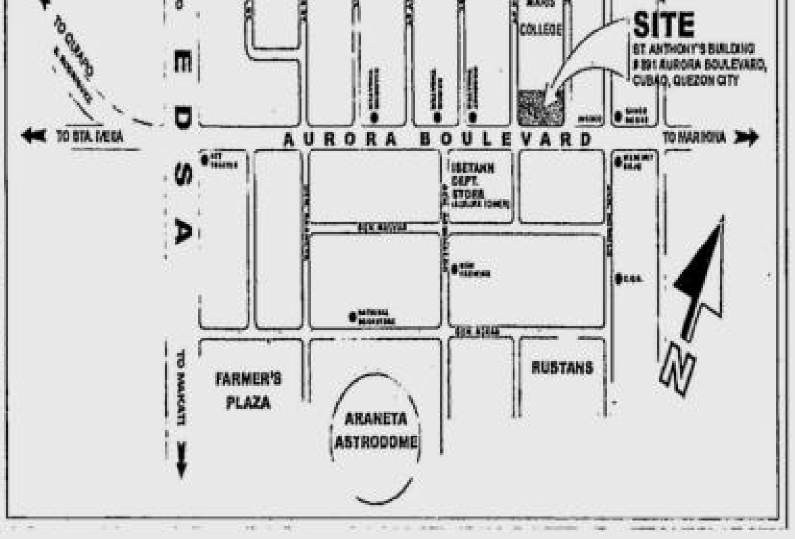

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HON. FRANKLIN DRILON	*– Senate President*

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NOTICE OF VOLUNTARY DISSOLUTION

Notice is hereby given that APV PHILIPPINES, INC. has filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission an Amendment of its Articles of Incorporation, shortening its corporate life to **December 31, 2001.**

Any person who may have a claim against said corporation may present the same to MS. PERMA NAVARROZA at the principal office at 7/F Common Goal Tower Finance Street, Madrigal Business Park, Alabang, Muntinlupa City.

The announcement serves as notice to all parties concerned of the dissolution of said Company.

(Sgd.) **ELIZER A. ODULIO**
Corporate Secretary
APV Philippines, Inc.

(PDI – Aug. 17, 24 & 27, 2001)

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INVITATION TO BID

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5 units	Storage Tanks 40 MB capacity each	80 ft. dia. x 48 ft. ht.
5 units	Storage Tanks 15 MB capacity each	48 ft. dia. x 48 ft. ht.
Petron Oil Depot - Lakandula Drive Bgy. Bonot, Legazpi City, Bicol		
1 unit	Storage Tank (P-2)	40 ft. dia. x 48 ft. ht.
1 unit	Storage Tank (P-3)	18 ft. dia. x 30 ft. ht.
1 unit	Storage Tank (P-5)	30 ft. dia. x 30 ft. ht.
1 unit	Storage Tank (P-6)	50 ft. dia. x 30 ft. ht.

Bidders may secure their bid form at Treasurers Dept., 38th Floor, Petron Megaplaza Building, Sen. Gil Puyat Ave., Makati City. Fully accomplished sealed bids should be submitted to Petron not later than 2:00 PM on **August 27, 2001**.

Petron reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any defect contained therein and accept the offer most advantageous to Petron. For site inspection, please coordinate or contact **Mr. Benjamin D. Tan** at **886-3888 local 3821**.

(PDI – Aug. 17, 2001)

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528-0213, 527-3342

MEGAMALL
635-0219, 635-0220

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Education, Culture, and Sports
Third Elementary Education Project

INVITATION FOR BIDS

Date: August 6, 2001
Loan No. 4108-PH
IFB No. PISU-CO/232001

1. The Government of the Republic of the Philippines (through the Department of Education, Culture and Sports (DECS)) has received a loan from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) in various currencies towards the financing of Third Elementary Education Project (TEEP). It is intended that part of the proceeds of this loan will be applied to eligible payments under the contract for supply and delivery of Office Equipment to Selected Division and District Offices in the Philippines.
2. The Department of Education, Culture and Sports (DECS), Project Implementation Support Unit (PISU) for Third Elementary Education Project (TEEP), now invites sealed bids from eligible bidders for the supply and delivery of office equipment.
3. For the purpose of this bidding, eligible bidders shall be those who have experience in the supply or selling and distribution or delivery of office equipment to remote areas in a developing country like the Philippines.
4. Interested eligible bidders may inspect the bidding documents at or obtain further information from the Office of Bids and Awards Committee (BAC) for Foreign Assisted Projects, Ground Floor Rizal Bldg. II, DECS Complex, Meralco Avenue, Pasig City, Tel. No. (632) 636-6542 or 632-1361 local 2085 or Telefax No. (632) 636-6542.
5. A complete set of bidding documents may be purchased by interested bidders starting August 6, 2001 upon submission of letter of intent to the above and upon payment of a nonrefundable fee of One Thousand Pesos (P1,000.00).
6. The provisions in the Instructions to Bidders and in the General Conditions of Contract are the provisions of the World Bank *Standard Bidding Documents: Procurement of Goods.*
7. Bids must be delivered to the Bulwagan ng Karunungan, Rizal Building I, Department of Education, Culture and Sports, Meralco Avenue, Pasig City, Philippines, on or before 10:00 a.m. on **September 13, 2001** and must be accompanied by a security of two (2) percent of total bid price.
8. Bids will be opened in the presence of bidders' representatives who choose to attend at 10:00 a.m. on **September 13, 2001** at Bulwagan ng Karunungan, Rizal Building I, Department of Education, Culture and Sports, Meralco Avenue, Pasig City.
9. Prior to bid opening, a pre-bid conference will be held on **August 23, 2001,** 10:00 a.m. at the address indicated in paragraph 8.

(Sgd.) **ERNESTO S. PANGAN**
Undersecretary and
Chairman, BAC

(PDI - Aug. 13, 15 & 17, 2001)

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MYRON CU UNJIENG PAPA

Peacefully joined our Lord on August 16, 2001.

His wife **Remedios**; children **Monty** and **Lissy**, **Louie**, **Monique** and **Mon**; grandchildren **Bianca** and **Paolo**; his mother **Caridad**; brothers, sisters, other relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the Central Chapel of St. Jerome Emiliani and Sta. Susana Church, Ayala Alabang, Muntinlupa City.

Interment will be on Saturday, August 18, 2001 at the Crypt of St. Jerome Emiliani and Sta. Susana Church, after the 2:00 PM Holy Mass.

In lieu of flowers, donations to the Orphanage of Casa Miani of the Somascan Fathers will be greatly appreciated.

Our Dear MAMA,

Luz Besa Ilagan

Now peacefully rests in the infinite Grace of our Lord on the 15th day of August 2001.

Wife to **Arturo Sr.** (†), and mother to her loving children **Eddie** and **Luz**, **Hernan** and **Lita**, **Arturo Bong**, **Mina** and **Ed**, **Bing** and **Mau**, **Pina** and **Bob**, **Ofelia** and **Rolly**; her grandchildren, other relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at Mt. Carmel Church, New Manila, Quezon City.

Cremation will be on Sunday, August 19, 2001 at La Funeraria Paz after the Requiem Mass at 4:00 P.M.

"From darkness let the light shine!"

Genesis 1:3

The Family of the late

REMIGIO S. ONG

who passed away on August 14, 2001 at the age of 49.

His bereaved wife **Carmen**; children **Richard** & **Malen**, **Ronald**, **Catherine** & **Raymond**, and grandchild **Hans**, request your prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

His body lies in state at the La Funeraria Paz, Araneta Ave., Quezon City.

Interment will be on Sunday, August 19, 2001 at the Eternal Gardens Memorial Park, Balintawak, Caloocan City.

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"For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain."
Philippians 1:21

The Family of the late

LIM, SY LEE

who passed away on August 13, 2001 at the age of 77.

Wishes to inform relatives & friends that her body lies in state at Chapel A-3, La Funeraria Paz, G. Araneta Ave., Q.C.

Her bereaved husband **Antonio Lim** (†) and children **Josefa**, **Pilar**, **Jaime** & **Sabina**, **Lito** & **Luz**, **George** & **Isabel**, **Cary** & **Cynthia**, **Lorenzo** and **Maria** (†) request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Interment will be on August 18, 2001 at Ever Memorial Garden, Valenzuela City at 9:00 A.M.

"...to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord."
2 Corinthian 5:8

JOVITA DECENA YABUT

Peacefully joined her Creator on August 15, 2001 at the age of 85.

Her loving children **Chito** and **Alice**, **Freddie** and **Belle**, and **Christy**; her grandchildren **Dona** and **Nol**, **Jovy**, **Lyn**, **Andre**, **Ting**, **Nina**, and **Christina** together with her sisters, relatives and friends requests everyone to rejoice at her return to our Creator.

Her remains lie in state at Bethany Baptist Church in Dian St. corner Emilia St., Makati City.

Cremation will be on August 18, 2001, 3:00 PM at Manila Memorial Park, Sucat, Parañaque.

ARNULFO "Manuel" E. TAN

August 15, 1942 - August 14, 2001

His loving wife Soledad; children Elmer, Earl (†), Grace Marilou and Amalia; daughter-in-law Emelyn; brothers and sisters Luis (†), Ramon, Pilar, Manuel, Lourdes, Tony, Pedro (†), Julieta and Lydia; and grandchildren Eula Joy, Earl Joshua and Evan Jacob; request the pious readers to say a little prayer for the repose of his soul.

The body lies in state at Loyola Memorial Chapel in Guadalupe, Makati.

Cremation will be at Loyola Crematory Services, Inc. in Guadalupe, Makati at 4:00 PM.

For further details, please contact 0919-8175261, 0917-7490127, tel. nos. 895-1011 to 24.

In Loving Memory

on the 3rd Death Anniversary of

AUGUSTO T. MATEO

who died in the Grace of our Lord on August 17, 1998

The family, relatives and friends request the pious readers to remember **"Ogie"** in their prayers.

People, Events & Products

ARIES B. ESPINOSA, Assistant Editor

NPC seeks buyers for P.5-T insurance policy

THE NATIONAL Power Corporation (NPC) has proposed to the Government Service Insurance System (GSIS) to work hand-in-hand to bid out this month its multimillion-dollar insurance policy for NPC's fixed assets, as part of overall preparations for the state-owned power firm's forthcoming privatization.

NPC president Jesus N. Alcordo said the proposed plan is for the bidding to take place by end of August and will be conducted using NPC's electronic bidding (e-bidding) system. This, as NPC's existing Industrial All-Risk (IAR) policy is set to expire on Sept. 30.

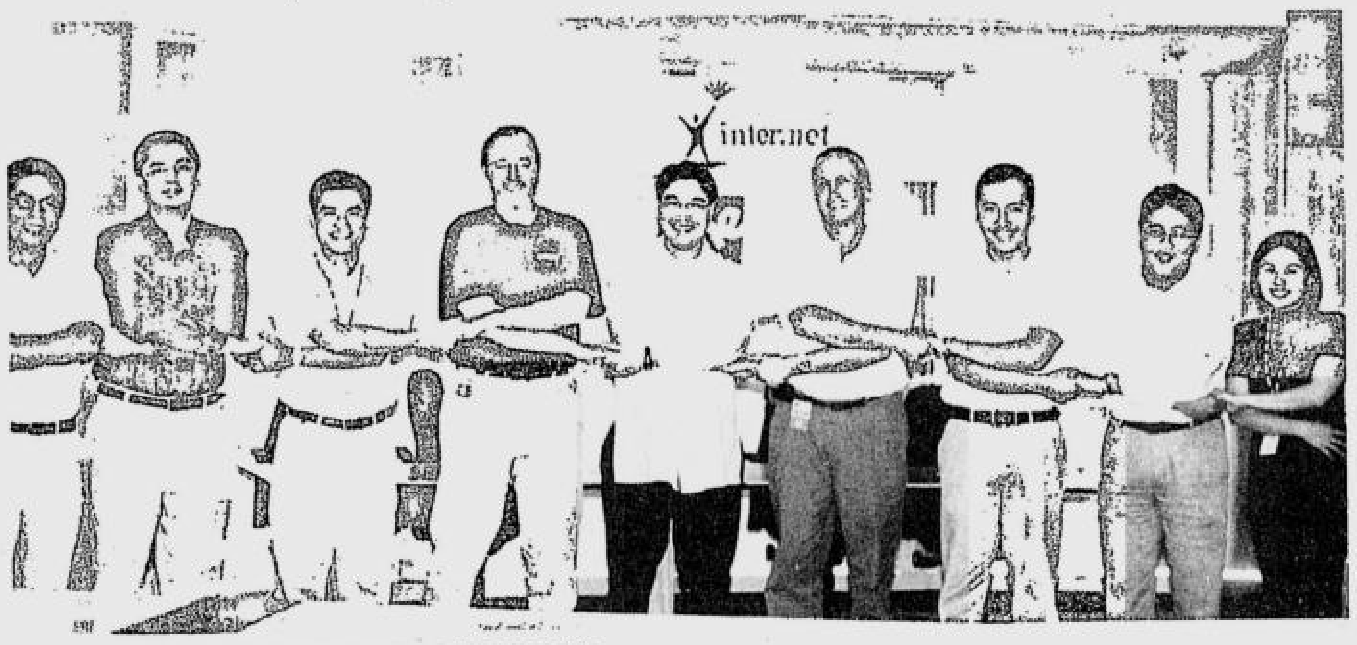
"We want a policy that conforms to internationally accepted standards and responsive to the forthcoming changes arising from NPC's privatization," Alcordo said, adding that NPC at present has insurable assets amounting to an estimated $10 billion. These assets consist primarily of its power plants, substations and transmission line network throughout the country, which will eventually be sold to private investors as part of NPC's privatization program.

At least four companies have signified interest. These are Benfield Greig, Marsh, Jardine Davies, Generali Pilipinas and Aon Risk Services. Jardine Davies and Marsh hold a significant majority of NPC's existing policy.

Alcordo said that NPC has proposed to GSIS to form a joint bidding committee that will be tasked to prequalify bidders, prepare the Terms of Reference for the tender, evaluate submitted bids, and recommend award to the winning bidder(s). By Alcordo's estimates, a provisional award should be given to the winning bidder(s) by Sept. 7, just in time for the Sept. 30 expiry of the present policy.

For its part, NPC is preparing a data-library room within the NPC Diliman headquarters where prospective bidders can source common information that will help them prepare to submit competitive proposals. The data will include basic information about NPC's assets, the structure and pricing of NPC's insurance requirements, and complete updated information on NPC's filed and outstanding insurance claims.

Because of the magnitude of its insurance requirements and the value of its fixed assets, NPC will be more actively involved and work with GSIS in farming out the policy to a number of reinsurance companies.



DIGITELONE-INTER.NET VENTURE
DigitelOne recently joined hands with Inter.Net, a global Internet service provider that offers dial-up, broadband satellite and wireless Internet access to consumers in Latin America, Europe, North America and Asia. With the high demand for Internet service in the country today, this venture came at the most opportune time. Now, these high demands can be met, thanks to DigitelOne and Inter.Net. Shown from left are Danny Rostrata, DigiteOne's sales manager; Tim Samson, Inter.net Philippines senior vice president; Brian Go, DigitelOne managing director; Kurt Bauman, Inter.net chief executive officer; Lance Gokongwei, DigitelOne president and CEO; David Browning, Inter.net president; Patrick Palacios, DigitelOne vice president for corporate solutions; Fernando Contreras, Jr., Inter.net president and Kristine Rodriguez, DigitelOne accounts manager.

ROBINSONS, COKE AND FORD AGREEMENT
The Robinsons Malls forged an agreement with Coca Cola Bottlers Phils. Inc. and Ford Philippines in connection with the recently concluded Robinsons Food Court's 'Cool Meals, Cool Wheels' promo. Present during the contract signing were (seated, from left) Eugene Tan, Ford Balintawak's sales manager; Tess C. Miranda, Robinsons Malls' ad and promo manager; and Sixto Lopez, Coca Cola Bottler's Philippines' key account manager. Standing (from left) are Alfred Legaspi, Ford Balintawak's sales consultant and Rogie A. Lee, Robinsons Malls' senior ad and promo officer.

Ahead review this August

REVIEW courses are meant to increase a student's chances for success in admission tests. Not all review centers, however, are created equal.

Ahead Tutorial and Review Center, the leader in tutorial and review services, will hold high school entrance test review for Philippine Science High School, Ateneo, La Salle Greenhills and other high schools starting this month.

Ahead also employs graduates from the top schools to conduct review classes. The youth of its instructors reduces any age-gap friction that may arise between instructor and reviewee.

Then there are the test-taking tips the center is known for. Participants in Ahead's review classes learn how to manage their time and how to handle difficult questions that they may encounter in the actual exam. This is a particular advantage that Ahead has over other review centers.

Visit or call any Ahead's offices in Greenhills, Ortigas and its main office at 309 Katipunan Avenue, Loyola Heights, Quezon City or call 426-0034 to 36.

ERRATUM

In the Maybank congratulatory announcement which appeared in the MAA General Assurance Phils. full page ad on Tuesday, Aug. 14, 2001, the phrase "The largest banks in Malaysia" should have read "The largest bank in Malaysia."

Our apologies for the error.

WARM WELCOME FOR RP TEAM
RP team members Vince Hizon (center) and John Ferriols (right) are welcomed by residents of Dumaguete City during the final tune-up game between the RP team and Cebu Gems. The tune-up games and cage clinics for the Southeast Asian Basketball Assocition (Seaba)-bound RP team are under the Rexona Ultimate Challenge series. For more news about Rexona's games, visit its website at www.ultimatechallengeseries.com.

BUSINESS*Friday*

MARGIE QUIMPO-ESPINO, Business Features Editor

DROPS FLAMBOYANCE FOR LEAN AND MEAN

Ad man looks for silver lining in a crisis

BY MARGIE QUIMPO-ESPINO

TOM Banguis, head of AB Communications Co. Inc., believes that crisis and opportunity are one, just like the Chinese character for the two words.

He lived up to his belief when he put up his all-Filipino advertising agency at the time when his previous employer lost its bread-and-butter account and 60 people faced the possibility of losing their jobs.

It was August 1993 and Avia Communications, a joint venture between Avellana and Associates and Lintas, lost the $30-million Philippine Airlines account after handling it for seven years.

Multinational advertising agency J. Walter Thompson got the lucrative contract during the Ramos administration when former Agriculture Secretary Carlos Dominguez took over the reins of the flag carrier.

Difficult transition

PAL's pullout was a bitter pill to swallow for Banguis and the Avia staff as the PAL account financed their operations.

Avia was actually created to service PAL's advertising needs. For decades, PAL had been using foreign owned agencies until 1986 when the wave of nationalism that swept the country after the Edsa Revolution prompted Dante Santos, PAL's president at that time, to give local professionals a chance.

The choice was down to major advertising firms Avellana and Lintas. To resolve the matter, a joint venture was formed. Thus, Avia was born with Banguis as president and part owner.

"It was a high point in my career—traveling all over the world, calling meetings among European agencies in London, going to Frankfurt, then moving to Asia and calling a meeting among Asian agencies that implemented the campaigns," Banguis recalls.

From 16 people, the staff of Avia grew to 60.

Banguis says their "Beauty of the Philippines, come shining through" campaign won numerous advertising awards and was even recognized abroad.

But as in everything else, all good things must come to an end. For Avia, the end came when it lost the PAL contract.

Sad ending

Although Avia had other clients such as Universal Robina Corp., PAL was the one client that provided Avia's president and staff with the funds to finance their fast-paced and jet-setting life for seven years.

Banguis knew it would be a matter of time before Avia would have to close shop since its other accounts simply could not finance the agency's operations, so he decided to go on his own.

Since he started Avia from scratch, he felt he had enough experience to make a success out of his own venture. He invested some P7 million out of his personal funds.

"I figured that it won't be difficult to make a go of my project because I felt I had a strong organization to make the venture worthwhile. When Avia finally closed shop, I offered jobs to all the employees that were let go," he relates.

Banguis even offered the staff the same salaries they were getting with Avia, even if he and his wife had limited resources.

Good office

With the plan firmly in place, he went out looking for a good office address.

"I did not want to have a loser's image. We left our old office and got an office at the Pacific Star (which during that time was one of the most expensive addresses)," Banguis says.

TOM BANGUIS started his own ad agency amid a crisis and used bravado and a no-fail attitude to sustain him.

"It is important that the business community respected the organization and that some of the clients who stayed with us believe we could carry on," he says.

Some of the clients they brought in from Avia include Splash Manufacturing Corp., Red Bull, Eye-mo and Quick Chow.

Many people initially thought Banguis' move did not make good business sense, especially when he decided to take in the entire staff of Avia.

"It is not usual for one to adopt all 60 employees but there was an emotional component, a little bravado and some arrogance," he explains.

He had the mindset, however, that he cannot fail and this belief inspired him to succeed.

AB Com started with P80 million in billings (value of ads placed in various media venues like newspapers, radio, TV). This was equivalent to about P12 million in revenues for the firm based on the standard 15-percent commission charged by ad agencies for ad placements.

With the combined effort of the staff, hard work and dedication, AB's billings went up to P170 million in 1995, P240 million in 1996 and P290 million in 1997.

Rude awakening

But the following year, 1998, was a rude awakening for AB Com, which as Banguis describes, had never known failure. Billings dropped 12 percent that year.

"We recrafted our vision. We will never be able to succeed as a Filipino agency versus multinational in the numbers game since they had global alignments working for them. But we can manage our business much more efficiently and effectively," he says.

The goal now, Banguis says, is for AB Com to become one of the most profitable agencies in the world by 2005, respected for its creativity and productivity.

They had to do away with their old culture that they developed while handling the PAL account.

"There were a lot of excesses. We were not so sensitive to principles like lean and mean. We had parties here and there," Banguis says.

When reality bit in 1998, they developed a new lifestyle at the firm, which was one way to compete with the bigger agencies.

"We encourage quick reaction and get extraordinary things done quickly," he says.

PAL was a bittersweet experience for Banguis and the rest of the staff, but it was part of his destiny.

"You look for the silver lining during a crisis. The entrepreneur in you will always see the opportunity in a crisis. I could not have built this agency if there was no crisis with Avia," Banguis muses.

Extending the search

But Banguis does not keep the search for the silver lining to himself. He extends this to his clients.

During the Asian currency crisis in 1997-1998, for instance, AB Com put together a special presentation that showed how companies all over the world continued to promote their products despite a recession.

"And we told our clients that it is possible to continue to promote the product despite the difficult times," he says.

This is especially true for personal care products.

"We Filipinos are vain. We feel good about ourselves if we look good and there is an opportunity to do well in selling low-priced products," he says.

He proudly relates the experience of Splash Manufacturing, one of AB's first clients, which grew from a modest firm into a multibillion company.

Linea turns to unusual to sell

THE LINEA Italia Group (LIG) continues to employ unconventional marketing strategies in its bid to increase market share. LIG chair Freddy Panicucci says that this is the company's way of stirring the interest of its current and potential clientele.

The promotions that LIG staged in the past like "Buck A Band," "One Peso Concert," and the "flood" sales all carried a positive message that was never lost even with the frenzied attention that they received from the public—unwavering confidence in the market, empowering the peso, creating opportunities out of crises, and most of all, faith in the ability of the Filipino to make things happen.

This August, LIG is using yet another unconventional, and some may say "rebellious" approach, with its ongoing "Fashion Rebellion" sale and "Fashion Revolution" show at the RCBC Tower in Makati on Aug. 23.

The "uprising" is giving the market the best Italian buys with discounts of up to 70 percent. The "revolution," on the other hand, will be a unique by-invitation-only fashion show and party that would showcase models in military-inspired regalia in a camp-like atmosphere. "This will bring out the rebel in us; to do away with the boundaries of fashion that limit us from expressing ourselves and exercising our choices," Panicucci said.

In preparation for this, Panicucci went on a business trip to Italy to meet with suppliers who signified their support for LIG.

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Las Piñas City
Tel. Nos 871-3878 / 80 / 94
GM AUTOWORLD - Makati
Makati City
Tel. Nos 843-0217 to 20 / 814-0803 / 814-0835
GM AUTOWORLD - Quezon Avenue
Quezon City
Tel. Nos. 374-1250 to 59 / 362-8001
GM AUTOWORLD - Shaw
Mandaluyong City
Tel. Nos. 535-4938 / 633-1263

Luzon
AMIANAN MOTORS
Rosario, La Union
Tel. Nos. (072) 712-8881 to 84
Baguio City
Tel. Nos. (074) 300-8862 to 63
San Fernando
Tel. Nos. (072) 700-8862 to 63
Laoag
Tel. Nos. (077) 781-8862 to 63
Dagupan
Tel. Nos. (075) 515-8802/8808
CHEERS TRADESTAR, INC.
Santiago City
Tel. Nos. (078) 682-7451 / (078) 682-8143 / (078) 682-8080
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Publishing firm moves from paper to discs

Earnings expected to triple in two to three years

By Christine A. Gaylican

MARKETING STRATEGY

FOR 19 years, Diwa Publishing, makers of Salaguinto and Bato Balani educational science magazines. has catered to thousands of public and private school students and teachers.

The advent of the Internet age, however, urged the management and marketing people of Diwa Publishing to develop a new marketing strategy to retain its hold on the student market.

The Diwa Connectivity project is the program that aims to interconnect all the schools and educational organizations that subscribe to the Diwa publications via the Internet.

"This is more than just a marketing tool for us, this would in a way break down the technological divide among the high-end and low-end private schools," says William Fernando, Diwa's Scholastic Press executive director.

Schools currently connected to Diwa include Paco Catholic School, the Roosevelt Educational Systems and Pateros Elementary School, which have subscribed to Diwa's publications for the past 15 years.

Diwa plans to put 100 private schools online by next year.

Under the Diwa Connectivity program, Diwa Publishing will install Internet-ready computers with licensed software, multimedia kit and Bato Balani and Salaguinto CD-ROMS for free.

The package includes free webpage hosting with the school's own domain address and 20 e-mail accounts for the school's administrators, webpage development and design.

Diwa will likewise provide unlimited Internet access and the school's webpage will be included in Diwa's online school directory.

"Another added feature to the package is a forum chat, where educators will be able to chat with co-educators," Fernando adds.

Expensive program

Elma Legua-Ropeta, Diwa Publishing's vice president for sales and marketing, admits that the Diwa Connectivity program is an expensive marketing strategy as the package costs some P300,000 to P400,000 per school.

Diwa, however, is willing to shoulder the expense, believing that the program will eventually result in the doubling or tripling of earnings over the next two to three years via the sales of the digital versions of the Bato Balani and Salaguinto publications.

"Build it and they will come" has become the marketing dictum of Diwa Publishing as the company strives to create a need for their educational CDs.

"With this project we just hope to start the ball rolling. During these times, you have to bring your products to your customers. If they are satisfied they go back for more," says Diwa Publishing chairman Saturnino Belen, who is also the president of Singapore-listed Filipino semiconductors company Fastech Synergy Ltd.

Ropeta says Diwa decided to give away the computers and the software for free as Diwa's educational magazines cater to the Lower B, C and D markets, thus, selling the magazines and textbooks in compact disc format alone would be difficult.

Diwa also noted the fact that most schools do not have enough computers for their students.

By providing the computers and the software, Diwa is confident that the sales would eventually follow.

Ad agency search on

THE SEARCH is on for the 2000 Agency of the Year Award (AOYA) with the theme "Exceeding Expectations," an uplifting and encouraging call for the ad agency industry to continue to weather the economic storm with positive results that defy doomsday scenarists.

"Exceeding Expectations is also about us in the ad agency business: doing a balancing act, prodding ourselves forward, finding the best where no one else thought it could be found, rediscovering our inner reserves, remembering identities we may have somewhat lost along the way," explained Barbara Gonzalez, chair of this year's AOYA.

Launched in 1997, the AOYA is a project of the Association of Accredited Advertising Agency of the Philippines (4As-P) that gives recognition to member agencies—regardless of size or affiliation—which have excelled across all areas of advertising disciplines.

Participating agencies will be vying for five categories: Best in Creative, Best in Management of Business, Best in Market Performance, Best in Media, and Best in Industry Leadership and Community Leadership.

Through the Production house of the Year Award, the AOYA also acknowledges the film, audio and print production houses, which have helped enliven the advertising agencies' creative expressions.

The AOYA is open to all 4As member agencies, big or small, which may choose to compete in just one or in all categories. Entries must be submitted not later than Aug. 15, 2001 to the 4As secretariat for screening by this year's AOYA management committee after which will be submitted to a board of judges for evaluation. Entry fee per category is P2,500 or P10,000 all-inclusive fee if an agency decides to enter in all categories.

"The AOYA is the only award that champions and recognizes creative excellence, media savvy, capability to sell, business management leadership, and good corporate citizenship," said Gonzalez.

Invited to sit in this year's AOYA board of advisers are reputable men and women in their respective professions, which includes Jayjay Calero, Former chairman and president, J. Walter Thompson; Greg Garcia, former chairman, Hemisphere-Leo Burnett; Jose Avellana, chairman, Avellana and Associates; Sen. Loren Legarda; Lydia Echauz, dean De La Salle Graduate School of Business; Juan Collas, chairman, Baker Mackenzie; and Greg Navarro, senior partner, Punongbayan & Araullo.

Moving this year's AOYA management team is led by Barbara Gonzales of J. Romero & Associates, chair. Panel heads include Roberto Caballero, Caballero Worldwide Partners for Creative; Ricki Arches, McCann Erickson for Management of Business; Chiqui Lara, Basic Advertising for Market Performance; Tong Puno, TBWA/Santiago Mangada Puno for Meddia; Miguel Ramos, Aspac Advertising for Industry Leadership and Community Service; Randy Aquino, Jimenez D'Arcy for Research; Bong Osorio, Campaigns & Grey for PR, Micky Domingo, McCann Erickson for Production of the House of the Year; and Vanne Tomada for Administrative.

70th ANNIVERSARY

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BANKING *Quarterly*

RAUL O. MARCELO, Editor ■ CORRIE S. NARISMA, Assistant Editor

Banks weather crises

BY CLARISSA S. BATINO

THE SECOND quarter rode high on the momentum of the newly installed Macapagal administration, but it ended on a sour note as one crisis after another shook an already weakening economy.

The banking sector was one that heaved a big sigh of relief with the transition in power as there was no telling where the financial crisis would have led it if Estrada had continued his reign.

All eyes, however, were on Bangko Sentral Governor Rafael Buenaventura and Equitable-PCI Bank, both strongly associated with the Estrada regime. There was focus on the long delayed rehabilitation of the Philippine National Bank and the reopening of Urban Bank.

Buenaventura, a high school classmate of Estrada's, was being pressured by various politically motivated groups to resign, with the lobby reaching Malacañang during the early days of the Macapagal administration.

A seasoned banker with a vast international experience, Buenaventura's six-year tenure will end in July 2005.

Support for honoring the BSP chief's term and the independence of the central bank as a whole, immediately came from the Makati Business Club and the International Monetary Fund, bringing Malacañang back to its senses to eventually dismiss what some interest groups had urged it to do.

Alongside challenges to the central bank chief, Equitable-PCI Bank was also striving to undo the damage caused by its association with the previous administration.

Equitable-PCI was touted to be the banking sector's biggest beneficiary of the power shift, having been one of the biggest victims of the "juetengate" scandal.

The heavy withdrawals from the bank, which industry players estimated at more than P80 billion from the fourth quarter of 2000 to the last days of the Estrada administration, gradually waned during the early days of President Macapagal.

The plan to take in a new partner during the second quarter and possibly acquire a new name to wipe out the "Jose Velarde" stigma was dropped by Equitable-PCI. The bank continues to be controlled by the Go family.

Last May, Equitable-PCI decided to retain only its name as it moved, reportedly with the prodding of the BSP, to revamp its management and install a new president.

A Citibanker like Buenaventura, Equitable-PCI Bank president Deogracias Vistan has vowed to turn the bank's finances around, pay off the P30-billion emergency loan from the BSP and recover this year, more than half of the deposits it had lost.

Formerly the country's third largest, Equitable-PCI had dropped to fourth place in terms of assets at P236.25 billion, down 4.5 percent from the previous quarter and 3.1 percent a year ago.

During the quarter, it was the Metrobank Group which regained from Bank of the Philippine Islands the distinction of having the largest asset base in the second quarter at P378.48 billion, up 1.4 percent from P373.09 billion the previous quarter. This followed the completion of its acquisition of Solid Banking Corp., which boosted the group's asset base by P48.9 billion.

BPI is now trailing Metrobank with assets of P354.14 billion. However, the Ayala-controlled bank still kept its hold on the top spot in terms of investment in bonds and other instruments, as well as in capital accounts. ***(See tables on page C2.)***

But back to the drawing board at the onset of the second quarter was the rehabilitation of Urban Bank.

State-insurer PDIC, which acted as receiver for Urban, had placed the rehabilitation of the defunct lender back on the auction block in late March with the intention of finding another white knight to buy the bank's 28 branches and its remaining assets on or before the first anniversary of its closure.

Urban Bank had declared a bank holiday effective April 26, 2000 and was consequently shut down by the BSP's policy-making Monetary Board on the same day.

Bank of Commerce had backed out from its planned merger with Urban Bank toward the end of the first quarter. Eighth largest lender Rizal Commercial Banking Corp., dubbed by Buenaventura himself as the industry's sleeping giant, expressed interest in acquiring a majority control of Equitable-PCI and later, of Urban Bank.

RCBC reportedly made a very cheap offer for Equitable-PCI and then backed out from the bidding for Urban Bank.

Urban's white knight turned out to be the Export-Industry Bank, controlled by the Philippine Exporters Confederation Inc., which took over from where Bank of Commerce left off with a similar, if not better, deal with the big depositors and investors of Urban Bank.

Urban Bank's 28 branches thus reopened last Aug. 8 under the name of the exporters' bank.

For PNB, the road to rehabilitation was simply paved with good intentions but, unfortunately, continued to fail to produce effective results.

Last May, the government embarked on a plan dubbed as reverse privatization or renationalization to convert part of its P25-billion emergency loan extended by the BSP and the PDIC last October into equity in PNB.

The reverse privatization was brought up after the government realized that a planned joint sale of its 16 percent in PNB with Lucio Tan's 67 percent was not realistic.

From having been fourth biggest in terms of assets early last year, PNB slipped to sixth place with assets of P186.3 billion. The capital account of the bank controlled by the tobacco and airline taipan had declined by 28.2 percent in the second quarter to P15.46 billion from P21.52 billion a quarter ago.

Bad loans

Even after the second quarter had ended, the government has yet to get the go-ahead of Tan for the equity conversion, stalling the rehabilitation of PNB which was made part of renationalization plan.

As of the second quarter, the bank nursed the second highest ratio of nonperforming loans in the industry with 44 percent, up from 40 percent the previous quarter out of a loan portfolio of P44.74 billion.

Singapore's United Overseas Bank continued to carry the largest bad loans ratio of 62.7 percent out of P4.88 billion in total loan portfolio from 56.6 percent in the first three months of the year out of P4.059 billion in total loans.

With a worsening loan portfolio as shown by a 16.81-percent NPL ratio in May from 16.76 percent a month ago, banks have started to become more concerned about how they could collect the soured loans or sell assets they have foreclosed to improve their loan and asset quality.

Foreign institutions took advantage of the situation to initiate talks with local banks about how asset management companies could help the lenders collect the past due loans or sell idle, foreclosed assets, or both.

The AMC fever caught fire in the second quarter as PNB, Metrobank, Equitable-PCI and Land Bank of the Philippines started talks with mostly foreign groups selling their respective AMC solutions.

On the policy-side, the early part of the second quarter was very promising as the BSP brought down its overnight borrowing rates twice in the second quarter to its current 9 percent for borrowing and 11.25 percent for lending.

Indicators at that time were pointing to further cuts in the central bank's interest rates which should have led to lower bank lending rates and bring down the cost of government's borrowing.

Toward the end of the second quarter, market expectations had pushed the benchmark treasury bill rates down to a low of 8.65 percent. But no local rates cut was forthcoming despite a quarter-of-a-percentage point cut in US rates as domestic and global threats to inflation and the peso emerged.

BANKS / C3

Investing in bank instruments makes sense nowadays

BY ELENA R. TORRIJOS

WITH the stock market down and business prospects discouraging, more and more people are turning to banks where they can park their money safely. They, however, look for ways to maximize the earnings of their savings. The INQUIRER asked officers of some of the country's top banks for some tips on what types of investments would they recommend to clients with P100,000 to invest. Here are their answers:

Rene J. Buenaventura
executive vice president
retail banking group head
Equitable PCI Bank

BUENAVENTURA

I've narrowed down my recommendations based on the needs of most customers. Equitable PCI has four ideal products for these types of investors: Moneymax, FASTeller, Optimum and FASTSaver.

Moneymax is ideal for people who are willing to place their funds in long-term but higher interest-yielding investment that they can access on a regular basis. Requiring a minimum placement of only P50,000, Moneymax is a 5-year placement product that guarantees tax-free interest earnings that are credited monthly to the depositor's designated Equitable-PCI Bank savings or current accounts.

FASTeller Savings Account is suited for those who want easy access to their funds anytime and anywhere. FASTeller, whose main delivery channel is the ATM, is an interest bearing peso-denominated savings account packed with flexible features. In addition to instant fund availability from any Equitable- PCI Bank FASTeller, BancNet and Megalink ATM nationwide, clients can access their account anywhere in the world via PLUS ATMs and withdraw in the currency of the country they are in.

Optimum carries the best features of a savings account and a time deposit as it bears tiered rates and depositors can withdraw up to nine times per quarter without penalty. Deposits can be made anytime just like in a savings account.

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INVESTING/ C3

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How the banks fared

Total Assets of Commercial Banks
(1st & 2nd Qtrs. 2001 and 2nd Qtr. 2000)

Ranking Q2	Q1	Commercial Banks	Q2	Q1	% Change	Q2 '00	% Change
1	1	Metropolitan Bank & Trust Co.	378,479,694,512	373,087,518,646	1.4%	348,100,000,000 [d]	7.2%
2	2	Bank of the Philippine Islands	354,144,051,651	348,600,105,904	1.6%	314,736,430,276	10.8%
3	4	Citibank	257,122,772,188	231,623,857,498	11.0%	181,876,729,747	27.4%
4	3	Equitable PCI Bank	236,252,442,638	247,585,705,454	-4.6%	255,515,228,055	-3.1%
5	5	Land Bank of the Philippines	210,912,392,938	207,713,907,896	1.5%	201,849,387,862	2.9%
6	6	Philippine National Bank	186,312,968,405	188,289,109,200	-1.0%	185,430,269,532	1.5%
7	7	Development Bank of the Philippines	173,992,887,266	169,509,124,792	2.6%	147,153,513,687	15.2%
8	8	Rizal Commercial Banking Corp.	130,414,741,674	127,578,619,200	2.2%	106,241,271,973	20.1%
9	9	United Coconut Planters Bank	110,564,599,100	111,050,638,805	-0.4%	107,691,114,323	3.1%
10	10	Allied Banking Corporation	94,024,240,699	90,632,500,633	3.7%	95,083,920,918	-4.7%
11	11	China Banking Corp.	77,441,676,373	72,772,951,654	6.4%	69,038,086,481	5.4%
12	13	HSBC	76,184,344,361	63,838,104,297	19.3%	50,572,532,814	26.2%
13	14	Banco de Oro	67,511,443,069 [a]	62,727,839,977 [b]	7.6%	53,200,000,000 [c]	17.9%
14	12	Security Bank Corp.	62,632,079,840	63,892,651,909	-2.0%	65,670,383,943	-2.7%
15	15	Global Bank	57,168,543,094	55,172,501,386	3.6%	50,303,306,247	9.7%
16	17	Union Bank of the Philippines	52,021,727,005	49,859,377,299	4.3%	48,607,613,641	2.6%
17	16	Prudential Bank	48,790,513,474	51,137,129,960	-4.6%	40,649,762,688	25.8%
18	19	Standard Chartered Bank	40,656,829,938	36,933,629,287	10.1%	36,420,483,074	1.4%
19	18	Philippine Bank of Communications	38,460,279,375	39,174,474,974	-1.8%	37,954,538,545	3.2%
20	20	International Exchange Bank	34,801,201,423	33,905,287,342	2.6%	33,316,519,443	1.8%
21	21	Philippine Trust Co.	30,104,458,465	28,298,614,542	6.4%	25,211,017,358	12.2%
22	22	Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi Ltd.	22,137,858,523	21,439,432,119	3.3%	19,604,060,644	9.4%
23	23	Bank of Commerce	18,471,530,596	18,953,243,473	-2.5%	15,305,163,438	23.8%
24	28	International Commercial Bank of China	17,805,061,930	15,543,757,255	14.5%	13,554,731,687	14.7%
25	24	ING Barings	17,542,149,371	17,016,810,653	3.1%	18,275,552,602	-6.9%
26	26	United Overseas Bank	16,956,680,804	16,160,811,170	4.9%	15,474,092,865	4.4%
27	27	DBS Bank	16,906,210,739	16,015,275,588	5.6%	14,171,134,371	13.0%
28	31	Fuji Bank Ltd.	16,368,966,331	14,098,056,408	16.1%	12,756,788,363	10.5%
29	25	Deutsche Bank AG	15,128,622,693	17,015,493,499	-11.1%	16,898,677,178	0.7%
30	33	Chinatrust (Phils.) Comm'l Bank Corp.	13,481,088,483	12,618,818,882	6.8%	10,469,958,345	20.5%
31	29	Bank of America	13,380,482,213	15,084,899,672	-11.3%	14,840,372,339	1.6%
32	30	Philippine Veterans Bank	12,790,610,498	14,523,576,414	-11.9%	13,497,666,829	7.6%
33	32	Australia and New Zealand Banking Group	12,741,545,408	13,702,792,200	-7.0%	9,767,007,986	40.3%
34	34	East West Bank	12,107,514,451	11,155,642,950	8.5%	8,958,604,001	24.5%
35	35	Traders Royal Bank	10,511,534,547	10,732,347,047	-2.1%	10,414,987,939	3.0%
36	36	Asia United Bank	10,364,359,377	9,765,407,207	6.1%	8,768,281,935	11.4%
37	37	Chase Manhattan Bank	9,218,160,014	9,061,941,974	1.7%	9,767,329,257	-7.2%
38	38	Maybank Phils. Inc.	8,903,955,644	8,363,686,016	6.5%	6,767,748,269	23.6%
39	40	Export and Industry Bank	7,213,370,405	7,376,673,425	-2.2%	7,791,202,453	-5.3%
40	39	Banco Santander Phils., Inc.	6,723,455,930	7,511,279,416	-10.5%	6,533,838,520	15.0%
41	41	Korea Exchange Bank	6,014,214,048	4,574,348,555	31.5%	3,624,576,073	26.2%
42	43	Bangkok Bank	3,770,299,293	3,941,806,184	-4.3%	3,401,424,567	15.9%
43	44	TA Bank of the Philippines	1,572,267,985	1,930,788,879	-18.6%	2,047,608,208	-5.7%
		TOTAL Php	2,988,103,826,770	2,919,970,339,642	2.3%	2,697,312,918,476	10.8%

Investment in Bonds & Other Debt Instruments of Commercial Banks

Ranking Q2	Q1	Commercial banks	Q2	Q1	% Change	Q2 '00	% Change
1	1	Bank of the Philippine Islands	87,496,007,298	89,510,010,939	-2.3%	46,003,208,857	90.2%
2	2	Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co.	83,880,924,973	78,065,232,785	7.4%	51,000,000,000 [d]	64.2%
3	3	Land Bank of the Philippines	56,953,078,169	55,815,555,240	2.0%	18,775,122,139	203.3%
4	4	Citibank	34,713,817,104	32,550,433,489	6.6%	31,054,970,060	11.8%
5	5	Philippine National Bank	32,162,278,054	31,736,990,855	1.3%	18,896,592,123	70.2%
6	6	HSBC	22,688,193,789	24,015,307,447	-5.5%	16,967,532,952	33.7%
7	7	Equitable PCI Bank	21,251,366,927	23,490,519,052	-9.5%	20,026,048,046	6.1%
8	8	Allied Bank	21,241,778,455	22,084,869,510	-3.8%	8,711,515,693	143.8%
9	9	Development Bank of the Philippines	17,761,366,078	20,104,027,944	-11.7%	14,328,335,066	24.0%
10	11	Union Bank of the Philippines	15,358,346,744	13,939,154,788	10.2%	10,427,520,685	47.3%
11	10	China Banking Corp.	13,273,943,695	14,385,753,735	-7.7%	16,923,428,285	-21.6%
12	14	Banco de Oro	11,586,347,124 [a]	10,200,227,311 [b]	13.6%	7,438,100,000 [c]	55.8%
13	12	United Coconut Planters Bank	10,672,808,647	12,582,386,504	-15.2%	9,008,028,657	18.5%
14	15	Prudential Bank	9,950,507,109	9,557,734,673	4.1%	6,735,230,359	47.7%
15	17	Rizal Commercial Banking Corp.	9,046,501,721	8,569,927,827	5.6%	3,079,052,470	193.8%
16	16	Global Bank	8,832,035,706	8,892,911,197	-0.7%	7,352,049,432	20.1%
17	13	Security Bank Corp.	7,675,346,807	11,029,569,287	-30.4%	9,079,289,448	-15.5%
18	20	International Exchange Bank	6,442,461,255	5,947,872,134	8.3%	557,570,000	1055.5%
19	18	United Overseas Bank	6,392,102,845	6,355,211,035	0.6%	5,351,477,728	19.4%
20	19	Standard Chartered Bank	5,370,440,323	6,206,685,923	-13.5%	5,919,554,469	-9.3%
21	21	Philippine Trust Co.	4,979,459,185	4,989,496,105	-0.2%	3,338,983,429	49.1%
22	22	Philippine Veterans Bank	3,411,118,449	3,506,555,551	-2.7%	3,524,769,691	-3.2%
23	28	Philippine Bank of Communications	3,260,100,447	2,062,427,809	58.1%	1,526,377,213	113.6%
24	24	Chinatrust (Phils.) Comm'l Bank Corp.	3,226,718,229	2,608,468,588	23.7%	1,826,708,280	76.6%
25	27	Bank of Commerce	2,945,272,339	2,122,134,251	38.8%	1,712,215,670	72.0%
26	23	DBS Bank	2,828,194,336	2,757,521,430	2.6%	2,086,394,718	35.6%
27	26	Bank of America	2,778,186,324	2,310,380,955	20.2%	2,124,681,288	30.8%
28	25	Chase Manhattan Bank	2,161,287,486	2,484,532,921	-13.0%	2,747,484,398	-21.3%
29	29	ING Barings	1,296,877,127	2,021,444,097	-35.8%	1,643,187,858	-21.1%
30	33	East West Bank	1,218,974,893	903,015,138	35.0%	917,970,947	32.8%
31	32	Maybank Phils. Inc.	1,109,914,811	1,064,942,242	4.2%	838,396,706	32.4%
32	30	Export and Industry Bank	1,013,480,918	1,439,835,275	-29.6%	1,024,810,565	-1.1%
33	34	Australia & New Zealand Banking Group	949,012,179	902,116,111	5.2%	751,373,111	26.3%
34	35	Korea Exchange Bank	801,894,177	804,730,602	-0.4%	769,478,834	4.2%
35	37	Banco Santander Philippines, Inc	795,297,693	738,427,315	7.7%	1,095,012,627	-27.4%
36	36	Asia United Bank	781,038,956	790,611,337	-1.2%	487,614,874	60.2%
37	38	International Commercial Bank of China	690,532,318	634,361,000	8.9%	4,206,347,049	-83.6%
38	40	Traders Royal Bank	562,561,134	352,871,763	59.4%	399,986,330	40.6%
39	39	Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi Ltd.	505,703,858	500,338,561	1.1%	437,930,565	15.5%
40	41	Bangkok Bank	294,502,640	279,328,809	5.4%	251,933,699	16.9%
41	31	Fuji Bank Ltd.	281,318,008	1,266,277,064	-77.8%	1,133,275,887	-75.2%
42	43	TA Bank of the Phils.	1,978,118	-		14,563,597	-86.4%
43	42	Deutsche Bank AG	-	-		1,624,298,737	
		Total Php	518,643,076,449	519,580,198,597	-0.2%	342,218,422,540	51.6%

Total Capital Accounts of Commercial Banks
(1st & 2nd Qtrs. 2001 and 2nd Qtr. 2000)

Ranking Q2	Q1	Commercial banks	Q2	Q1	% Change	Q2 '00	% Change
1	1	Bank of the Philippine Islands	51,074,956,607	49,088,875,108	4.0%	50,399,625,420	1.3%
2	2	Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co.	47,591,043,210	47,438,659,760	0.3%	51,600,000,000 [d]	-7.8%
3	3	Equitable PCI Bank	44,529,531,792	44,845,054,112	-0.7%	45,268,374,158	-1.6%
4	5	Land Bank of the Philippines	18,630,253,722	19,493,593,651	-4.4%	17,456,782,103	6.7%
5	6	Development Bank of the Phils.	17,291,956,376	16,237,236,895	6.5%	15,019,788,139	15.1%
6	4	Philippine National Bank	15,457,219,417	21,526,538,488	-28.2%	12,433,448,608	24.3%
7	7	Rizal Commercial Banking Corp.	13,877,248,523	14,021,976,637	-1.0%	14,018,942,232	-1.0%
8	8	Union Bank of the Philippines	12,439,176,673	13,014,734,660	-4.4%	11,641,514,991	6.9%
9	10	China Banking Corp.	12,250,453,102	12,091,265,938	1.3%	11,542,906,944	6.1%
10	9	Allied Bank	11,778,850,737	12,909,165,443	-8.8%	12,932,001,802	-8.9%
11	11	United Coconut Planters Bank	9,181,733,998	10,226,777,163	-10.2%	12,410,571,789	-26.0%
12	12	Security Bank	8,780,523,575	8,610,163,999	2.0%	7,902,898,506	11.1%
13	16	Banco de Oro	8,361,137,926 [a]	8,265,892,674 [b]	1.2%	7,900,000,000 [c]	5.8%
14	13	Prudential Bank	8,089,286,178	7,827,504,276	3.3%	4,705,758,815	71.9%
15	14	Global Bank	7,365,753,568	7,381,993,272	-0.2%	5,371,467,422	37.1%
16	15	Philippine Bank of Communications	6,139,695,601	6,126,702,446	0.2%	4,766,628,730	28.8%
17	17	Citibank	4,653,719,035	4,652,848,949	0.0%	2,564,890,300	81.4%
18	18	Philippine Veterans Bank	3,626,231,195	3,831,700,179	-5.4%	3,671,910,416	-1.2%
19	19	Philippine Trust Co.	3,511,789,068	3,490,972,917	0.6%	3,254,321,348	7.9%
20	21	International Exchange Bank	3,508,299,786	3,406,628,533	3.0%	3,508,903,848	0.0%
21	20	Bank of Commerce	3,482,289,668	3,475,853,591	0.2%	3,543,443,477	-1.7%
22	23	Chinatrust (Phils.) Comm'l Bank Corp.	2,775,839,132	2,784,735,252	-0.3%	2,546,252,385	9.0%
23	24	Asia United Bank	2,743,645,343	2,705,775,700	1.4%	2,510,644,405	9.3%
24	22	Export and Industry Bank	2,743,165,748	2,810,084,633	-2.4%	2,851,251,809	-3.8%
25	25	East West Bank	2,681,525,162	2,691,168,110	-0.4%	2,408,948,036	11.3%
26	26	Banco Santander Philippines, Inc.	2,515,323,665	2,513,805,144	0.1%	2,486,771,312	1.1%
27	30	United Overseas Bank	2,340,250,817	1,603,113,864	46.0%	2,353,804,953	-0.6%
28	28	DBS Bank	1,980,385,534	2,166,532,736	-8.7%	2,264,113,913	-12.5%
29	29	Maybank Phils. Inc.	1,780,602,182	1,839,246,346	-3.2%	1,932,648,597	-7.9%
30	31	HSBC	1,350,000,000	1,350,000,000	0.0%	1,350,000,000	0.0%
31	35	Standard Chartered Bank	1,240,000,000	900,000,000	37.8%	900,000,000	37.8%
32	33	ING Barings	1,237,500,000	1,237,500,000	0.0%	1,237,500,000	0.0%
33	32	TA Bank of the Phils.	883,601,569	1,272,151,034	-30.5%	1,353,085,169	-34.7%
34	36	Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi Ltd.	720,433,671	720,433,671	0.0%	720,433,671	0.0%
35	34	Deutsche Bank AG	625,000,000	1,110,487,235	-43.7%	625,000,000	0.0%
36	37	Fuji Bank Ltd.	601,912,599	601,912,599	0.0%	601,912,599	0.0%
37	38	International Commercial Bank of China	448,390,660	438,157,374	2.3%	398,637,573	12.5%
38	39	Bank of America	422,500,000	422,500,000	0.0%	210,000,000	101.2%
39	41	Australia & New Zealand Banking Group	371,830,703	331,331,315	12.2%	250,340,141	48.5%
40	42	Chase Manhattan Bank	266,583,906	284,079,928	-6.2%	262,194,918	1.7%
41	43	Bangkok Bank	265,831,677	265,831,677	0.0%	265,831,677	0.0%
42	44	Korea Exchange Bank	257,000,000	257,000,000	0.0%	257,000,000	0.0%
43	40	Traders Royal Bank	106,095,011	333,069,062	-68.1%	1,041,119,065	-89.8%
		Total Php	339,978,567,134	346,605,054,371	-1.9%	330,741,669,271	2.8%

[a] Merged Banco de Oro & Dao Heng Bank

[b] Banco de Oro: Assets=58.2B; Bonds=9.9B; Capital=5.8B; Deposits=44.6B; Loans=31.3B; Ropoa=4.2B; NPL ratio=7.81%; NPL amount=2.8B
Dao Heng Bank: Assets=4.5B; Bonds=563.7M; Capital=2.4B, Deposits=1.8B; Loans=3.1B; Ropoa=90.8M, NPL ratio=19.66%; NPL amount=877.8M
Rounded off

[c] Banco de Oro: Assets=48.1B; Bonds=6.9B; Capital=5.4B; Deposits=35.5B; Loans=30.1B; Ropoa=1.5B; NPL ratio=7.81%; NPL amount=2.5B
Dao Heng Bank: Assets=5.1B; Bonds=538.1M; Capital=2.5B,Deposits=2.2B; Loans=3.5B; Ropoa=54.2M; NPL ratio=18.54%; NPL amount=726.8M
Rounded off

SOURCE: PUBLISHED STATEMENTS OF CONDITION, BSP

Total Deposit Accounts of Commercial Banks
(1st & 2nd Qtrs. 2001 and 2nd Qtr. 2000)

Ranking Q2	Q1	Commercial banks	Q2	Q1	% Change	Q2 '00	% Change
1	1	Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co.	302,619,168,590	297,054,940,490	1.87%	265,700,000,000 [d]	13.9%
2	2	Bank of the Philippine Islands	279,879,694,202	260,660,309,605	6.56%	235,668,382,961	18.8%
3	3	Land Bank of the Philippines	155,156,592,772	152,056,011,710	2.04%	148,181,737,815	4.7%
4	5	Citibank	140,402,762,654	130,709,095,691	7.42%	102,897,968,353	36.4%
5	4	Equitable PCI Bank	132,584,652,806	136,444,107,940	-2.83%	165,810,682,665	-20.0%
6	6	Philippine National Bank	124,897,000,180	120,795,999,232	3.39%	143,707,048,933	-13.1%
7	7	Rizal Commercial Banking Corp.	94,947,724,367	96,430,679,254	-1.54%	77,058,128,070	23.2%
8	8	United Coconut Planters Bank	87,226,620,783	89,369,331,560	-2.39%	80,577,335,221	8.3%
9	9	Allied Bank	77,047,637,843	73,416,301,943	4.95%	76,036,781,370	1.3%
10	12	HSBC	58,896,660,784	43,810,211,099	34.44%	32,368,436,467	82.0%
11	10	China Banking Corporation	56,148,081,738	52,440,132,899	7.07%	49,371,404,449	13.7%
12	11	Banco de Oro	49,471,539,621 [a]	46,344,266,677 [b]	6.75%	37,700,000,000 [c]	31.2%
13	14	Global Bank	45,194,728,393	41,810,859,514	8.09%	35,863,648,090	26.0%
14	13	Security Bank	42,334,784,460	43,769,692,454	-3.28%	40,581,564,129	4.3%
15	15	Prudential Bank	35,355,359,454	33,205,055,562	6.48%	31,371,096,470	12.7%
16	16	Development Bank of the Phils.	29,400,868,442	28,173,037,243	4.36%	26,423,071,127	11.3%
17	18	International Exchange Bank	28,367,586,284	27,102,085,968	4.67%	17,106,747,499	65.8%
18	19	Union Bank of the Philippines	28,088,841,603	25,056,391,860	12.10%	18,782,906,592	49.5%
19	17	Standard Chartered Bank	26,724,317,899	27,548,284,265	-2.99%	21,543,718,032	24.0%
20	20	Philippine Bank of Communications	25,994,924,100	24,334,675,710	6.82%	18,784,508,727	38.4%
21	21	Philippine Trust Co.	25,461,853,614	24,035,514,271	5.93%	20,251,086,778	25.7%
22	22	Bank of Commerce	13,719,718,736	13,324,029,031	2.97%	10,303,156,444	33.2%
23	23	United Overseas Bank	12,189,623,842	11,807,236,138	3.24%	8,620,001,856	41.4%
24	25	Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi Ltd.	10,606,199,670	10,391,856,710	2.06%	9,148,386,874	15.9%
25	28	Chinatrust (Phils.) Comm'l Bank Corp.	8,837,496,646	8,271,998,280	6.84%	6,726,057,719	31.4%
26	24	Deutsche Bank AG	8,673,636,455	10,439,480,572	-16.92%	9,118,801,852	-4.9%
27	29	East West Bank	8,441,488,170	7,862,899,188	7.36%	5,245,238,975	60.9%
28	27	Philippine Veterans Bank	8,159,806,060	9,700,423,830	-15.88%	8,928,861,420	-8.6%
29	30	Traders Royal Bank	7,299,530,487	7,193,653,611	1.47%	6,354,871,591	14.9%
30	26	Bank of America	7,164,559,519	9,804,909,195	-26.93%	8,868,502,916	-19.2%
31	31	DBS Bank	7,049,784,226	6,277,833,794	12.30%	4,816,955,410	46.4%
32	36	Australia & New Zealand Banking Group	6,094,933,576	3,617,293,367	68.49%	2,402,896,936	153.6%
33	32	Asia United Bank	5,596,546,217	5,239,421,246	6.82%	5,054,374,660	10.7%
34	33	Maybank Phils. Inc.	5,333,655,247	4,785,300,273	11.46%	4,044,600,252	31.9%
35	37	ING Barings	5,221,661,600	3,355,523,807	55.61%	4,291,559,355	21.7%
36	35	Chase Manhattan Bank	4,703,833,861	3,755,599,724	25.25%	5,496,762,581	-14.4%
37	38	Fuji Bank Ltd.	4,456,329,789	2,611,484,705	72.18%	2,198,104,413	104.6%
38	34	Banco Santander Phils., Inc.	3,726,624,419	4,470,309,132	-16.64%	3,649,451,946	2.1%
39	41	Korea Exchange Bank	2,636,619,661	1,912,193,761	37.88%	1,144,324,191	130.4%
40	40	Export and Industry Bank	2,569,131,396	2,132,384,941	20.48%	1,813,291,202	41.7%
41	39	International Commercial Bank of China	2,513,843,410	2,506,180,062	0.31%	1,895,509,281	32.6%
42	43	Bangkok Bank	422,056,906	408,002,725	3.44%	435,241,813	-3.0%
43	44	TA Bank of the Phils.	312,567,499	263,599,623	18.58%	462,327,410	-32.4%
		Total Php	1,981,971,048,081	1,906,688,607,662	3.95%	1,756,805,512,646	12.8%

Loans, Discounts & Advances of Commercial Banks
(1st & 2nd Qtrs. 2001 and 2nd Qtr. 2000)

Ranking Q2	Q1	Commercial Banks	Q2	Q1	% Change	Q2 '00	% Change
1	1	Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co.	171,845,841,813	170,937,873,205	0.5%	168,500,000,000 [d]	2.0%
2	2	Bank of the Philippine Islands	140,257,491,187	144,041,430,444	-2.6%	141,262,192,728	-0.7%
3	4	Land Bank of the Philippines	103,169,859,819	95,420,407,662	8.1%	103,269,518,013	-0.1%
4	3	Equitable PCI Bank	100,904,608,042	98,388,344,202	2.6%	107,616,905,633	-6.2%
5	5	Philippine National Bank	78,931,110,751	80,332,575,058	-1.7%	86,786,254,672	-9.1%
6	6	Development Bank of the Philippines	76,150,373,914	76,521,581,485	-0.5%	64,675,600,454	17.7%
7	7	Citibank	67,961,808,663	73,881,102,087	-8.0%	67,826,503,699	0.2%
8	8	Rizal Commercial Banking Corp.	65,689,416,937	68,454,497,908	-4.0%	62,914,048,538	4.4%
9	9	United Coconut Planters Bank	53,925,074,985	55,031,239,553	-2.0%	57,332,136,579	-5.9%
10	12	Banco de Oro	38,561,515,842 [a]	34,446,722,792 [b]	11.9%	33,600,000,000 [c]	14.8%
11	10	Allied Bank	37,844,015,803	39,341,138,429	-3.8%	35,023,096,020	8.1%
12	11	China Banking Corp.	35,409,863,665	35,816,025,880	-1.1%	34,856,407,240	1.6%
13	13	Global Bank	32,366,715,247	31,194,678,339	3.8%	24,537,792,321	31.9%
14	14	Security Bank	31,276,290,793	30,213,429,270	3.5%	30,661,957,196	2.0%
15	15	HSBC	20,287,211,074	21,522,606,665	-5.7%	15,287,759,926	32.7%
16	16	International Exchange Bank	19,375,176,867	19,525,471,698	-0.8%	20,048,973,594	-3.4%
17	18	Prudential Bank	19,259,800,195	18,967,328,672	1.5%	19,218,118,328	0.2%
18	17	Philippine Bank of Communications	17,638,460,054	19,199,080,109	-8.1%	20,225,454,178	-12.8%
19	19	Standard Chartered Bank	15,981,590,851	15,420,616,643	3.6%	13,456,120,013	18.8%
20	20	Union Bank of the Philippines	15,250,564,849	14,853,640,960	2.7%	15,912,671,715	-4.2%
21	21	Philippine Trust Co.	14,158,872,909	14,080,865,736	0.6%	14,802,618,265	-4.3%
22	23	Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi Ltd.	11,671,295,476	10,878,340,434	7.3%	10,081,765,883	15.8%
23	36	ING Barings	10,658,264,972	8,858,989,044	20.3%	10,942,438,775	-2.6%
24	24	International Commercial Bank of China	10,567,875,666	9,502,906,905	11.2%	8,443,473,611	25.2%
25	25	DBS Bank	9,552,906,011	9,369,890,453	2.0%	8,258,829,293	15.7%
26	22	Bank of Commerce	9,364,037,358	10,933,277,932	-14.4%	8,271,288,172	13.2%
27	27	Chinatrust (Phils.) Comm'l Bank Corp.	8,475,737,905	8,028,168,000	5.6%	5,968,749,193	42.0%
28	28	Fuji Bank Ltd.	7,596,664,671	6,845,959,937	11.0%	5,948,393,415	27.7%
29	29	United Overseas Bank	7,445,648,290	6,584,072,165	13.1%	6,781,548,758	9.8%
30	30	Asia United Bank	7,025,333,742	6,527,906,499	7.6%	4,791,629,723	46.6%
31	31	East West Bank	6,202,404,592	6,423,551,146	-3.4%	5,038,244,302	23.1%
32	32	Traders Royal Bank	4,941,480,904	4,974,721,867	-0.7%	5,249,886,562	-5.9%
33	33	Deutsche Bank AG	4,791,510,978	4,581,175,659	4.6%	4,544,788,241	5.4%
34	35	Maybank Phils. Inc.	4,524,666,798	3,901,178,878	16.0%	2,422,596,211	86.8%
35	34	Bank of America	3,987,005,164	3,920,184,345	1.7%	2,558,689,812	55.8%
36	37	Australia & New Zealand Banking Group	3,839,916,819	3,538,918,617	8.5%	2,870,623,733	33.8%
37	38	Export and Industry Bank	3,441,240,907	3,469,825,085	-0.8%	4,709,468,382	-26.9%
38	36	Philippine Veterans Bank	3,320,592,237	3,754,169,015	-11.5%	5,729,940,208	-42.0%
39	39	Banco Santander Phils., Inc.	2,596,323,037	2,312,963,288	12.3%	1,993,324,421	30.3%
40	40	Korea Exchange Bank	1,805,795,453	1,779,011,563	1.5%	1,883,782,519	-4.1%
41	41	Bangkok Bank	1,184,554,206	1,126,166,858	5.2%	1,369,484,478	-13.5%
42	42	Chase Manhattan Bank	537,166,840	1,012,083,251	-46.9%	1,024,070,287	-47.5%
43	43	TA Bank of the Phils.	456,676,607	982,300,915	-53.5%	1,372,686,571	-66.7%
		TOTAL Php	1,280,252,862,902	1,276,896,418,655	0.3%	1,248,069,841,663	2.6%

Non-Performing Loans of Commercial Banks
(1st & 2nd Qtrs. 2001)

Ranking		Commercial Banks	Ratio to total loan portfolio		Amount of NPL		Total loan portfolio	
Q2	Q1		Q2	Q1	Q2	Q1	Q2	Q1
1	1	United Overseas Bank	62.70%	56.60%	4,879,740,688	4,059,764,470	7,782,680,524	7,172,728,745.05
2	2	Philippine National Bank	44.00%	40.00%	44,736,000,000	40,291,000,000	101,672,727,273	100,727,500,000.00
3	4	Bank of Commerce	30.93%	26.90%	3,275,958,849	3,242,841,972	10,591,867,985	12,056,519,209.09
4	3	TA Bank of the Phils.	28.00%	28.25%	271,527,000	291,851,000	969,739,286	1,033,100,884.98
5	6	Prudential Bank	24.93%	22.05%	5,291,543,753	4,477,541,655	21,225,606,711	20,306,311,360.54
6	5	Land Bank of the Philippines	24.23%	24.60%	30,002,332,058	29,357,816,194	123,823,079,067	119,340,716,235.77
7	14	United Coconut Planters Bank	23.37%	18.57%	15,433,314,158	12,817,865,456	66,038,999,392	69,024,585,115.78
8	7	Allied Bank	22.73%	21.96%	9,999,154,000	9,866,085,000	43,990,908,680	44,927,527,322.40
9	11	Export and Industry Bank	22.29%	19.98%	974,859,979	862,343,221	4,373,530,637	4,316,032,137.14
10	9	Bangkok Bank	20.74%	20.27%	397,525,462	388,188,432	1,916,709,076	1,915,088,466.65
11	8	Global Bank	19.89%	20.86%	7,193,951,720	7,371,470,042	36,168,736,652	35,337,823,787.15
12	10	Philippine Bank of Communications	19.81%	19.99%	4,727,742,432	4,782,132,344	23,865,433,778	23,922,623,030.82
13	12	Equitable PCI Bank	19.55%	19.78%	24,626,127,092	24,825,142,082	125,964,844,460	125,506,279,484.33
14	15	Rizal Commercial Banking Corp.	17.88%	17.58%	13,612,950,000	14,297,334,000	76,135,067,114	81,327,269,624.57
15	24	Philippine Veterans Bank	16.98%	13.09%	1,039,001,035	969,701,692	6,118,969,582	7,407,957,922.84
16	19	DBS Bank	16.62%	16.45%	1,992,560,836	1,838,375,092	11,988,934,031	11,175,532,474.16
17	20	Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co.	16.10%	15.27%	29,403,344,685	28,707,009,797	182,629,470,093	187,996,134,865.40
18	21	Union Bank of the Philippines	15.81%	14.71%	2,865,941,373	2,602,913,060	18,127,396,414	17,694,854,248.81
19	17	HSBC	15.46%	17.10%	4,381,249,000	4,147,538,000	28,339,256,145	24,254,608,187.13
20	22	Bank of the Philippine Islands	14.50%	14.30%	22,919,000,000	22,828,000,000	158,062,068,966	159,636,363,636.36
21	18	China Banking Corp.	14.47%	16.66%	6,195,700,497	7,024,601,340	42,817,556,994	42,164,473,829.53
22	23	East West Bank	13.20%	14.09%	994,635,632	1,015,912,053	7,535,118,424	7,210,163,612.49
23	26	International Exchange Bank	13.11%	12.67%	2,776,201,631	2,662,316,643	21,176,213,814	21,012,759,613.26
24	29	Korea Exchange Bank	12.11%	10.83%	245,006,419	201,051,278	2,023,174,391	1,856,429,157.89
25	31	Philippine Trust Co.	11.57%	8.79%	1,997,484,595	1,483,655,601	17,264,343,952	16,878,903,306.94
26	28	Maybank Phils. Inc.	10.86%	10.92%	615,188,781	559,128,501	5,664,721,741	5,120,224,371.15
27	27	Security Bank	10.74%	10.94%	3,825,654,077	3,758,985,969	35,622,477,439	34,360,017,998.17
28	16	Deutsche Bank AG	10.18%	17.53%	586,650,000	1,000,650,000	5,762,868,369	5,708,214,489.45
29	36	International Commercial Bank of China	9.92%	5.84%	1,097,867,123	580,668,312	11,067,208,901	9,942,950,547.95
30	30	Development Bank of the Philippines	9.61%	8.79%	7,865,834,971	7,644,317,985	81,850,519,990	86,966,074,687.14
31	32	Standard Chartered Bank	9.44%	8.33%	1,954,619,911	1,522,860,207	20,706,719,396	18,281,635,138.06
32	33	Banco de Oro	8.56% [a]	27.46% [b]	3,655,165,846 [a]	3,480,637,426 [b]	42,700,535,584 [a]	12,675,300,163.87 [b]
33	34	Chinatrust (Phils.) Comm'l Bank Corp.	7.94%	6.87%	697,510,117	561,308,267	8,784,762,173	8,170,426,013.39
34	35	Bank of America	6.54%	6.65%	260,870,000	260,878,620	3,988,837,920	3,922,986,766.92
35	42	Fuji Bank Ltd.	5.00%	1.00%	426,243,861	62,967,159	8,524,877,220	6,296,715,800.00
36	37	Australia & New Zealand Banking Group	4.35%	4.89%	173,161,020	173,161,020	3,980,713,111	3,541,125,160.53
37	38	ING Barings	4.30%	4.79%	488,988,922	396,174,066	11,371,370,279	8,270,857,327.77
38	41	Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi Ltd.	1.77%	1.57%	215,625,575	180,774,664	12,182,235,876	11,514,309,808.92
39	43	Asia United Bank	1.56%	0.40%	119,136,096	27,176,024	7,636,929,253	6,794,006,020.00
40	40	Citibank	1.50%	1.66%	2,113,719,899	2,105,097,235	140,914,659,933	126,813,086,445.78
41	39	Banco Santander Phils., Inc.	0.00%	4.65%	-	133,438,000	3,217,422,185 [e]	2,869,634,408.60
42	25	Chase Manhattan Bank	0.00%	12.98%	-	170,000,000	893,464,000 [f]	1,309,707,241.91
		Traders Royal Bank [g]						
		Total Php			264,329,289,093	253,030,673,858	1,545,471,846,812	1,489,586,830,024

Real and Other Properties Owned or Acquired
(1st & 2nd Qtrs. 2001 & 2nd Qtr. 2000)

Ranking Q2	Q1	Commercial banks	Q2	Q1	% Change	Q2	% Change
1	1	Philippine National Bank	22,581,451,151	24,445,712,230	-7.6%	23,938,108,206	-5.7%
2	2	Metropolitan Bank & Trust Co.	20,051,932,712	23,415,480,079	-14.4%	18,400,000,000 [d]	9.0%
3	3	United Coconut Planters Bank	19,510,627,763	18,265,695,417	6.8%	11,720,126,946	66.5%
4	4	Land Bank of the Philippines	9,917,768,820	10,146,193,429	-2.3%	8,663,860,279	14.5%
5	5	Equitable PCI Bank	8,942,867,188	8,902,380,261	0.5%	7,174,551,297	24.6%
6	6	Bank of the Philippine Islands	7,101,346,604	6,874,102,538	3.3%	5,415,104,223	31.1%
7	7	Rizal Commercial Banking Corp.	6,923,590,467	4,856,427,247	42.6%	4,064,864,475	70.3%
8	8	Union Bank of the Philippines	4,509,843,736	4,489,879,243	0.4%	4,223,972,863	6.8%
9	10	Allied Bank	4,321,952,565	4,136,771,276	4.5%	3,160,562,224	36.7%
10	9	Banco de Oro	4,293,776,946 [a]	4,276,351,088 [b]	0.4%	5,106,000,000 [c]	-15.9%
11	16	Global Bank	3,404,233,376	2,252,713,404	51.1%	528,119,335	544.6%
12	11	China Banking Corp.	3,121,633,910	2,926,249,914	6.7%	2,588,038,381	20.6%
13	12	Security Bank	2,870,769,367	2,772,294,388	3.6%	2,353,801,035	22.0%
14	14	Philippine Bank of Communications	2,863,216,377	2,684,762,962	6.6%	2,082,331,098	37.5%
15	13	Prudential Bank	2,704,388,091	2,698,771,122	0.2%	2,068,575,586	30.7%
16	15	Development Bank of the Philippines	2,673,448,817	2,551,059,437	4.8%	2,288,154,758	16.8%
17	18	International Exchange Bank	1,760,312,922	1,743,453,598	1.0%	1,164,982,215	51.1%
18	17	Traders Royal Bank	1,734,074,189	1,746,029,734	-0.7%	1,636,115,488	6.0%
19	19	Philippine Veterans Bank	1,504,546,487	1,494,031,027	0.7%	1,284,174,767	17.2%
20	20	Bank of Commerce	1,207,745,151	1,105,015,162	9.3%	1,010,592,520	19.5%
21	21	TA Bank of the Phils	632,710,705	519,170,398	21.9%	220,121,155	187.4%
22	22	East West Bank	555,821,631	492,451,314	12.9%	459,397,070	21.0%
23	23	Philippine Trust Co.	401,970,072	399,341,268	0.7%	667,000,883	-39.7%
24	25	Maybank Phils. Inc.	226,118,276	217,621,126	3.8%	188,058,658	20.2%
25	24	Export and Industry Bank	220,501,774	220,501,774	0.0%	215,359,157	2.4%
26	26	DBS Bank	151,712,835	194,974,376	-22.2%	200,449,671	-24.3%
27	28	Standard Chartered Bank	136,900,817	69,901,660	95.8%	77,812,275	75.9%
28	31	HSBC	90,720,125	20,316,822	346.5%	6,938,104	1207.6%
29	29	United Overseas Bank	67,509,121	67,388,537	0.2%	66,396,004	1.7%
30		Banco Santander	66,742,000				
31	30	International Commercial Bank of China	64,909,995	64,909,995	0.0%	58,033,244	11.8%
32	32	Citibank	709,125	709,125	0.0%	5,608,531	-87.4%
33	33	Bangkok Bank	35,877	34,686	3.4%	-	
34		Chase Manhattan Bank	32,000	-		-	
		TOTAL Php	134,615,019,991	134,050,974,635	0.4%	111,037,210,448	21.2%

[d] Metrobank: Assets=299.2B, Bonds=45.1B; Capital=46.1B; Deposits=231.3B; Loans=136.8B; Ropoa=17.2B; NPL ratio=11.35%; NPL amount=18.0B
Solidbank: Assets=48.9B; Bonds=6.0B; Capital=5.5B, Deposits=34.4B; Loans=31.7B; Ropoa=1.2B; NPL ratio=15.91%; NPL amount=5.8B
Rounded off

[e] Banco Santander total loan portfolio amount derived from its reported Dosri amount & Dosri ratio

[f] Figure given by Chase Manhattan

[g] No NPL ratio and amount reported

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'I'm going to be pushy to get things done'

Q&A

LEAVING a lucrative job behind, former Deutsche Bank country manager in the Philippines Jose Isidro Camacho joined the Macapagal administration last April to become, first, the secretary of energy and later, finance secretary.

His first few months at the Department of Energy already showed how capable Camacho could be as a public servant. He played a key role in steering the passage of the power reform bill, which had been pending in Congress for seven long years.

His current portfolio is no less challenging. Camacho faces the daunting task of stimulating the economy in the wake of a global economic slowdown and containing the country's budget deficit within the target.

But then, friends say the former investment banker came in well prepared for the task. They say that Camacho, who spent many years overseas, had always wanted to go back to the Philippines to serve in the government. As early as the Edsa revolution in 1986, he has been an active member of Manindigan! He would have been part of the late Finance Secretary Jaime Ongpin's team as head of a government financial institution had he not been "underage" at that time.

Camacho earned a three-year degree in Liberal Arts, majoring in Mathematics, and graduated cum laude from the De La Salle University.

After college and two years of working with a local banking group, Camacho went to the Harvard Business School where he got his MBA degree in 1979.

He spent the next 20 years in New York, Tokyo, Hong Kong and Singapore, holding top regional and country posts in Bankers Trust and, later, Deutsche Bank AG.

He and his wife Kim, both devout Catholics, have always been involved in various charitable and civic organizations. In Hong Kong the couple were part of the Marriage Encounter of Bukas Loob sa Diyos, a charismatic community.

Camacho expresses his deep faith in God in various ways. Not surprisingly, he named a government vehicle tasked to manage the $2 billion worth of liabilities of National Power Corp. PSALM, which stands for Power Sector Assets Liabilities Management Corp.

The 6-foot tall, 46-year-old finance secretary is said to be the richest member of the Macapagal Cabinet with over P300 million in assets.

Last month, Camacho sat down with the INQUIRER business reporters and editors to discuss his plans in managing the country's finances and the Macapagal administration's strategy in addressing pressing concerns of the country.

Excerpts from the interview:

Q: What are your plans for the country's capital markets?

A: My vision is to have a healthy, functioning, liquid and buoyant market.

This can be achieved by implementing reforms that will boost market activities. Some of them will involve legislative changes, some will involve providing ideas and directions to the PSE (Philippine Stock Exchange) and the SEC (Securities and Exchange Commission).

It's hard. There are so many specifics but a lot of them are works in progress, including the taxation of secondary transactions. I can't be more specific because we're still working out the details.

Q: What is your game plan as the de facto head of the economic team?

A: I guess I'll follow the game plan set by the President, whose strategic objective is poverty alleviation.

A major aspect of the game plan is the promotion of the capital markets. A key ingredient to that is the fiscal budget. A healthy budget improves your savings rate that, in turn, helps develop the domestic capital markets.

In terms of sectors, I think it's very clear that the government's priority sector is agriculture. The modernization of the agriculture sector is a key program of the government for a very good reason. More than 50 percent of our population is still dependent on agriculture, so if you really want to address the social base of our country, you really have to make sure our agriculture sector is very strong.

The second priority is ICT (information, communication and technology) because it's one area that will bring us to the new economy. It is also where we have a competitive edge given our English-speaking, highly skilled and creative manpower. In the IT business, that's very, very important.

The third priority area is tourism. It's another sector where we have an advantage, again because of our human resources.

But these three alone will not be able to employ all Filipinos. The only reason you prioritize is to make sure that everything that you do revolves around these priority areas.

Underpinning all these is what the President calls good governance, which I call management—the management of our economy and our country. That is key in implementing our strategy effectively.

Many of our programs are not necessarily new ideas. When you talk about cutting red tape and stopping graft and corruption, they are old story.

The difference lies on the implementation and that's where good governance comes in.

From the outside looking in, I thought the government was so poor in implementing things. There is the bureaucracy and everybody is afraid to make decisions.

Now that I am in government, I can observe that it's really happening. Now I have an opportunity to try to be part of changing that culture to something that is based on integrity, honesty, transparency, strong work ethics, working hard and competence.

Q: What kind of President do you think we have?

A: I think that, in a way, we have a very unique President. I'm not sure how many presidents have the kind of background that she has. First, she is a daughter of a former president, she's got political instincts. Second, she has background on economics, she understands business and the economy. Third, she has already been in the Executive branch (Department of Trade and Industry) and then, in the Legislature (as senator) so she understands legislation. She got all the key areas of expertise one needs to become an effective leader.

It's unfortunate that our external environment is just so harsh right now, making it very difficult to demonstrate results and successes immediately. The difficult external environment is dragging us down. And it doesn't help that we have peace and order and security problems that have been affecting everybody's morale. These are also high in the President's agenda.

So to me, that's the game plan, governance. I keep on going back to governance because the game plan is to be an effective manager of this country.

Q: What are your plans as finance secretary?

A: One of the important things I need to accomplish in my specific area is to raise government revenues. I need to use everything that I can use, all the creative juices that I have and all the help I can get from the team to increase our revenue base. That involves working primarily with the BIR (Bureau of Internal Revenue) and the Bureau of Customs, and being a little more creative in implementing other revenue generating activities, such as privatization.

We're doing non-conventional types of privatization that will allow us to generate additional revenues.

Q: How about fiscal discipline?

A: In fiscal discipline, I think we're doing quite well, (Budget Secretary) Emmie Boncodin is tough in managing our expenditures. I just need to be very supportive of people like (Revenue Commissioner) Rene Bañez.

Q: What are you doing to support him (Banez)? He seems to be under fire at the moment.

A: I can't really reveal to you every form of support that I discuss with him and I really shouldn't. I'm also working with him on some of his ideas. One thing that I'm trying to promote in the Department of Finance and all the attached agencies is the sense of teamwork.

Q: How do you remove the 'crooks' from the BIR?

A: You can't really do it overnight, that's the problem. This is where you kind of calibrate your moves. By working with him (Bañez), we hope we can work more effectively in trying to deal with the agency's transformation because it will require a lot of people and skills to work through the maze of dealing with personalities.

Q: How do you help in the BIR's transformation?

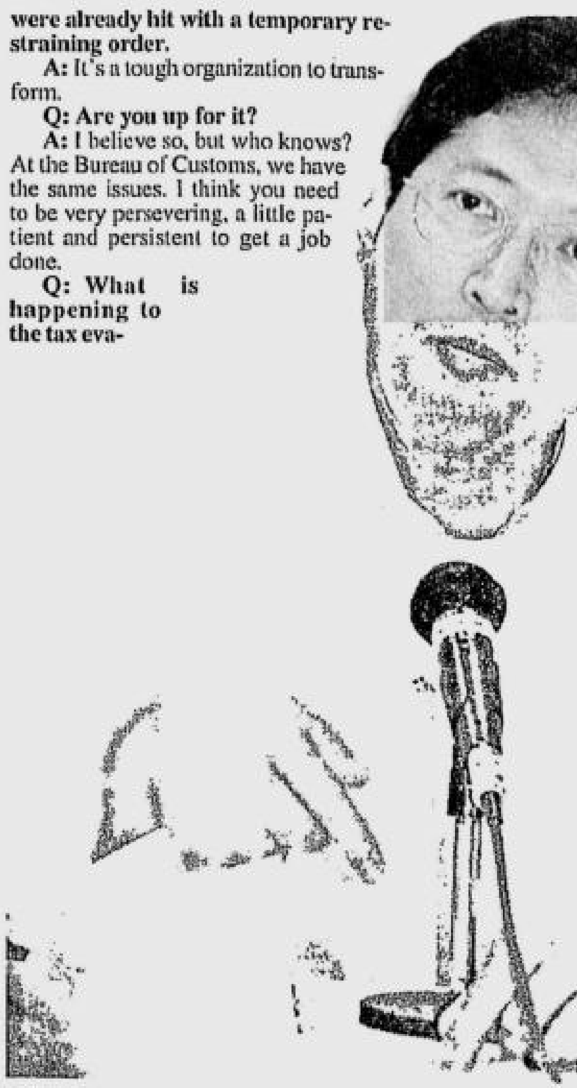
A: I'm supporting him (Bañez)on some of the administrative reforms that he intends to institute in the next six months. You know I'm working with him on the tax reform, the big change in the tax system that we are planning to do.

Q: You haven't fired anyone in the agency yet, you just transferred some people to other assignments and you were already hit with a temporary restraining order.

A: It's a tough organization to transform.

Q: Are you up for it?

A: I believe so, but who knows? At the Bureau of Customs, we have the same issues. I think you need to be very persevering, a little patient and persistent to get a job done.



CAMACHO

Q: What is happening to the tax evasion cases?

A: They are being pursued by the BIR.

I know civil society will crucify me for this but I take a more pragmatic view on issues like this.

Can I mention something? Because you were asking what my priorities in the department were but I only got to the first point, I didn't get to the second point.

The second point that I intend to prioritize is how to speed up the processes that I get involved in and to unclog bottlenecks that I see in the economy.

Q: Specifically?

A: I'm going to be pragmatic in dealing with some things that have been stuck up for years. Things like the utilization of official development assistance, coming up with ways to facilitate corporate restructuring in the country and providing ideas and solutions to the banking sector's NPL (non-performing loans) problems.

I spent a lot of time doing financial restructuring for companies when I was still in the private sector. I hope I'd be able to apply some of my knowledge and experience on a macro sense.

Q: What specific areas got your immediate attention?

A: The Meralco privatization, for example. I'll make sure that it will be done one form or another within the year. Regarding the PNB rehabilitation, I hope I can work with (Philippine Deposit Insurance Corp. head Norberto) Nazareno in working it out to make it happen. My training as an investment banker is closing deals and getting them done. Finding closure to anything that has been going around in circles and not getting done.

Q: How do you deal with difficult issues, PNB for example?

A: I think we're making good progress in our discussions. We're trying to reach an arrangement with the majority shareholder.

I always confront situations that have not been moving and eliminate overlaps. I see these everyday as I get briefings from many of the attached agencies.

In terms of overlaps, I've seen them even at the Department of Energy where the same issue was being addressed by three different units or two separate donors providing technical assistance for the same project. It's baffling how these things happen but they do happen.

Q: Maybe they want it to happen.

A: Not necessarily. I think it's just the history that some of these institutions have and the way people work. Maybe they have not been working as one.

I'll tell you something very specific. I attended a briefing by the National Tax Research people. They talked about what they were doing, what their priorities were. And I discovered that some of what they were doing overlap with those that the BIR and the revenue division of the DoF were also doing.

After that briefing, I decided to call a meeting with Bañez, Undersecretary Gison of the DoF and the head of the National Tax Research Center. We need to get together and understand the role of each of the units of the department on the issue of tax. If we understand the function of each group, I think we can work together better.

Very simple things like these—the blocking and tackling to get things right, avoiding the overlaps to be more effective.

Q: Do you encounter a lot of resistance to the changes you are planning to implement?

A: I'm sure there are. Change is very difficult to accept. Unfortunately resistance is one thing I'm so used to. Either they (the people who resist) get tired of me or I get tired of them. And I hope that promoting team effort even just within the Department of Finance will change the way of getting things done and make us more effective.

Q: Do you see signals of (economic) recovery? What are these?

A: Stronger exports, stronger peso. Look at the six-month and 12-month forecast of just about every foreign bank here. They're looking at an exchange rate in 12 months of P50.50 to $1 at the highest. These are the likes of Citibank, Hong Kong Shanghai Bank, Standard Chartered and Deutsche Bank.

The projection for six months is a little less bullish at a range of P50 to P52.

Q: You say banks are bullish. How come Deutsche Bank downgraded its GDP projection for the Philippines? Can it be bullish on the peso but not on the growth prospects?

A: You know they're different. The currency moves almost independently. I have already said that before when I was still a banker in a Finex meeting in 1997. That was the time the peso was really falling because of the Asian crisis. I said that it was unfortunate that many people have started to think that the foreign exchange rate measures economic success or failure. It really doesn't. Japan probably experienced its biggest growth when the yen was very week because it's a very export-oriented economy. Unfortunately, it has become a barometer of confidence so when the peso falls, you get depressed. But really when you think of the overall economy, it's not necessarily bad.

Q: Because Japan is strong in exports, depreciation is not bad for the Japanese but what about us? We are not strong in exports.

A: It also depends on your exports and imports. It depends on how price elastic your exports and imports are. For example, Malaysia has managed to defend the peg because its external accounts are not as affected by the foreign exchange rate. A lot of its exports are commodities, so it really doesn't matter what the exchange rate is. It sells as much as what the world market will take at world market prices

This means different economies respond to foreign exchange movements differently.

For us, on the average, the effect might even be neutral. What we have is a confidence problem. When people start talking about it (the falling peso), it becomes damaging because people get demoralized and they stop investing, spending, and that is going to affect economic growth.

Q: On the matter of the IPP, the 32 signed by the Ramos administration, the terms of which said to be disadvantageous to the government, are you pursuing the renegotiation of these deals?

A: I have to confess that we haven't been able to convene the review committee, which I'm supposed to chair.

Remember, we had Administrative Order No. 10, which pre-empted the passage of the (power reform) bill. The bill was passed and we now have some problems because the bill has its own provision for the review of the IPP contracts. It provides for a very specific composition of the review committee which is not exactly the same as that provided by AO No. 10, so we need to revise the order to conform to the requirements of the power reform law.

Q: What do you expect from the review? What changes in the terms of the contracts do you intend to introduce?

A: The review has two aims. One is to find out if there really are grossly disadvantageous terms in the contract that we can challenge. There's a specific provision that allows for arbitration. The second, and on best effort basis, is to renegotiate the terms bilaterally with individual contractors.

I think there's room for that. One possibility is to bring down the contract price in exchange for an extension in the contract period.

Q: What's the latest on the planned securitization of Pagcor and the privatization of Meralco?

A: On Pagcor's securitization, I'm still trying to set up a meeting with Pagcor chief Efraim Genuino to discuss with him what we could possibly do.

Securitization is just one option and it's not necessarily the only one. There are a few other things that we can do with the future revenues of Pagcor.

Q: What good will the securitization of Pagcor's future earnings do?

A: As the President said, you can commit your future revenues to create a bigger revenue base now to strengthen your economy because that will eventually provide a multiplier effect in future revenues. So it's like borrowing revenues of the future so that you can strengthen your economy now. In investment banking we say that a little differently, you have to spend money to make money.

Q: Your biggest problem now is overcoming the deficit, how do you intend to go about it?

A: We really need to focus on the revenue side. Our revenue base is too low, that's why the tax reform is very important. We are still trying to simplify the modified gross taxation scheme further so that we'll have a wider net. Also, we want to simplify it in terms of eliminating some of the (tax) returns that are unnecessary. I'm asking Commissioner Bañez to waive the filing of income tax returns for overseas Filipino workers. They're exempted anyway. You know how many trees we have to cut so we can harass millions of OFWs? We're reviewing these sorts of things.

Q: Are you still working on further cuts in government expenditures?

A: There has been a 10-percent cut in expenses and this is under the re-enacted budget, under A.O. No. 5. That's why we cut down on travel and other expenses, including advertising. I think we're now down to bare bones already. We've cut down expenditures to as low as we can and still be able to provide basic public services. That's why expenditures are no longer the issue here, it's now the revenues that we need to focus on.

Q: Going back to the matter of the capital markets, what specific reforms are you eyeing for this sector?

A: I support some tax measures like taxing the secondary trading of debt instruments.

Q: That proposal has been there for years.

A: See that's the thing, it's been there for so long, why wasn't it done? If it was a good idea five years ago, ten years ago, it's still a good idea now. Power bill was a good measure seven years ago, why wasn't it done until now? That brings us back to the boring part of blocking and tackling. Just do it, decide, take some risk. Many are just so scared. That's why the President is abolishing many of the inter-agency committees and task forces in the government.

Q: So Erap was right, you're all just full of meetings.

A: You know what happens with these things. You spend a lot of time meeting but come out with nothing. You are delegating the decision to the group instead of saying, hey, it's my discretion.

Q: How many people in the government are thinking the way you do?

A: I think there's many of us in the Cabinet who think that way.

There really are no secrets. Filipinos are very smart. I tell you every smart idea has already been thought, we just need to pull it out from a filing cabinet somewhere, and say, ah, this is the tax reform, the modified gross taxation, why don't we try this? It wasn't done before.

Q: When do we need to get the tax reform measures passed?

A: Asap. We just have to keep on pushing. I'm going to be very pushy. It's so frustrating to see how slow things move, you really just need to keep on pushing.

Q: Frustrating, especially compared to how the system works in the private sector?

A: Yeah, but I'm more realistic. It really doesn't dampen my spirits. It makes my job more fun, more challenging.

Q: What do you miss in your life in the private sector now that you are in government?

A: I miss my time. Because I tell you, here it's like doing a sprint race but without the finish line. You know how that feels like.

Q: You should set it, the finish line, for yourself.

A: But there's really no finish line. You know every morning you go to the office and you'll find so many papers even though you worked on so many already in the previous day. For example, I just attended a 30-minute meeting and when I came back to my desk, I found out the papers have piled up again. It's like there's really no end.

Q: Will you last?

A: I will last for as long as the public and the President will allow me.

Banks weather crises

(From page C1)

Traders first pointed to the Abu Sayyaf hostage crisis, which remained unresolved to this day, as the initial trigger for the peso's weakness that started in mid-June.

A spate of kidnappings drove the peso further down while worsening global conditions including a recession in Japan, a slowdown of the US economy, and political uncertainties in the region made an immediate recovery of the local currency as well as the economy much harder to achieve.

Restoring investor and creditor confidence with the Philippine government also became a more laborious task after the Macapagal administration hurdled its first 100 days in late April.

The fractious political climate after the arrest of former President Estrada led to the violent May 1 attack on Malacañang by supporters of the previous leader who had identified with his pro-poor policies.

Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho then took over from former finance chief and now Executive Secretary Alberto Romulo in early June.

It was also during this period that the pressure from international groups for the country to pass an anti-money laundering legislation intensified. ***(See related story on C4.)***

As the second quarter drew to a close, a worsening condition among global markets only served to aggravate the domestic setting.

However, things started to brighten starting July with the government's firm resolve to stem speculation in the foreign exchange market.

Investing in bank instruments makes sense nowadays

(From page C1)

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CHIONG

Sammy Chiong
First vice president
Region head for Visayas and Mindanao branches
China Bank

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But if the client will not use the money in the near future, he can opt for long-term investments like government securities such as Treasury Bills and Treasury Notes. These are long-valued effective debt instruments that are not only affordable but also safe, simply be cause they are guaranteed by the Philippine government. With a minimum investment of P50,000, one can avail himself of any of these two financial instruments.

SARMIENTO

Ma. Elena Sarmiento
First vice president
Head of trust banking division
United Coconut Planters Bank

The whole concept of investing depends on the risk appetite of individual investors and on the amount of resources they are willing to put into their various options. However, as a general rule, I will still advocate the "prudent man's rule" in investing one's funds. This means a thorough assessment of an investor's risk profile and the setting up of an appropriate investment program. The standard investment objectives are, of course, the preservation of principal and the maximization of earnings. One should also take into consideration the liquidity requirements of the clients. Having said that, I can now cite some specific investment options for various investor profiles.

For retirees who need a regular inflow of income with some potential trading gains to maximize earnings, the UCPB Personal Living Trust is the most appropriate. It features investments primarily in fixed-income securities—government securities and some prime corporate papers—and a small portion in blue chip equities like SMC, Ayala and Meralco.

For those who may want to prepare for the orderly disposition of their properties, we offer the estate planning services.

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A roadmap to money laundering

By Raul C. Dancel

WITH Congress set to go on a two-week recess next month and a Sept. 30 deadline to beat, the Macapagal administration is running out of time putting together an anti-money laundering law.

The Paris-based Financial Action Task Force, an inter-government agency formed by the Group of Seven industrialized nations, has given the Philippines until Sept. 30 this year to pass a law against money laundering.

To compel compliance, the task force has threatened the Philippines with sanctions that monetary officials say may paralyze the domestic economy.

Acting on this threat, President Macapagal-Arroyo has endorsed to Congress a bill that will supersede the bank secrecy law and combat money laundering.

The bill, drafted by an inter-agency body, seeks to dismantle an illicit network that has allowed corrupt government officials and criminals to convert profits from their illegal activities into legitimate assets using the financial system.

Will a simple law be enough to deal effectively with a problem as wide-scale and as complicated as money laundering?

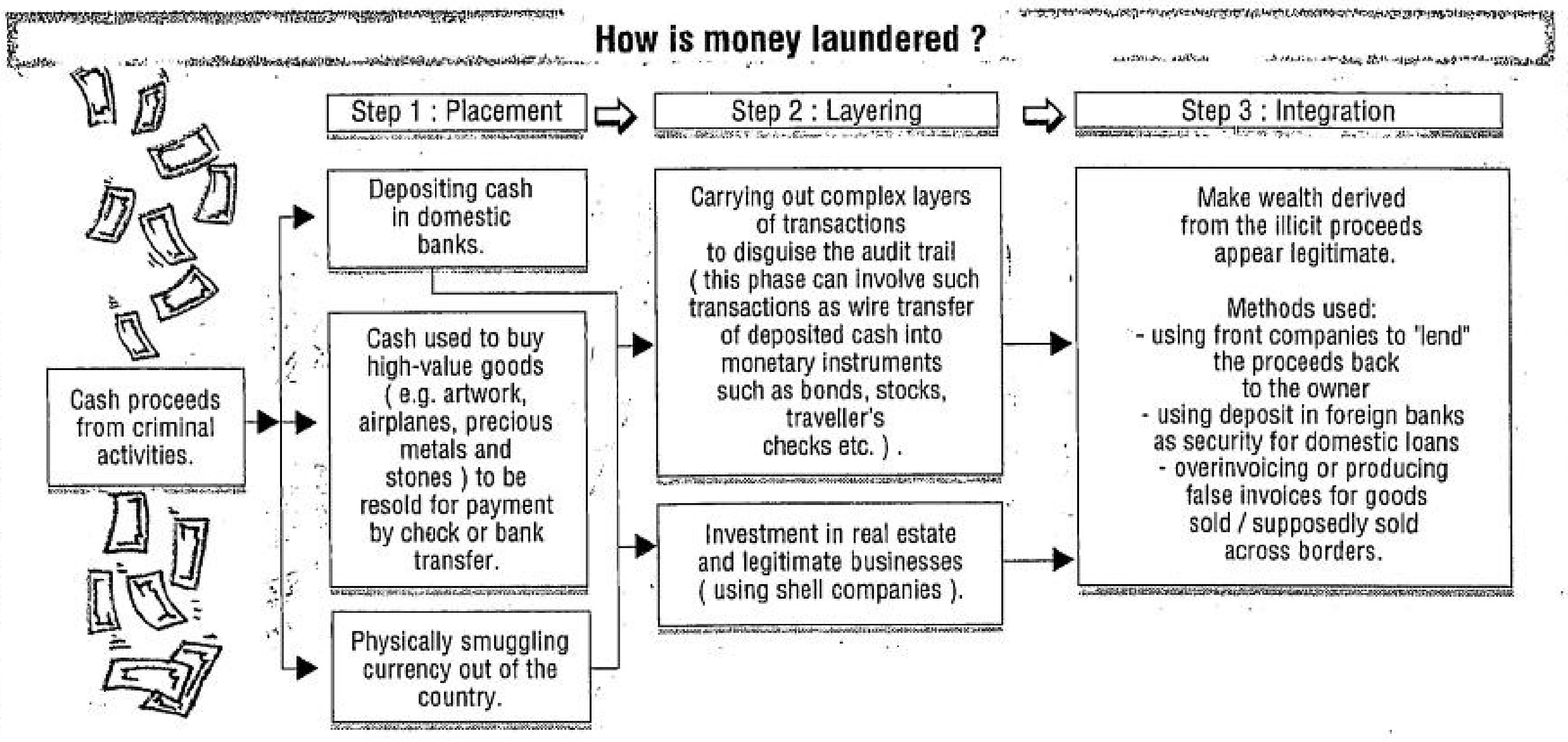
What is money laundering?

As the name suggests, money laundering is the process of cleaning dirty money. The money is "dirty" in the sense that it comes as proceeds from a criminal act.

Illegal arms sales, smuggling, drug trafficking, prostitution, embezzlement, insider trading, bribery and computer fraud are among these criminal acts. They can produce huge sums which, however, have to be "legitimized" before they can be used so as not to attract attention to the underlying activities or persons involved. This is done through either disguising the sources of the earnings, changing their forms, or moving the funds to places where they are less likely to attract attention.

By its very nature, money laundering occurs outside the normal range of economic statistics. But rough estimates have been put forward to give some sense of scale to the problem.

The International Monetary Fund has estimated that the aggregate size of money laundering in the world could be somewhere between 2 and 5 percent of the world's gross domestic product. These percentages indicate that money laundering involves between $590 billion and $1.5 trillion. The lower figure is equivalent to the value of the total output of an economy the size of Spain.


How is money laundered ?
Step 1 : Placement
Step 2 : Layering
Step 3 : Integration
Cash proceeds from criminal activities.
Depositing cash in domestic banks.
Cash used to buy high-value goods (e.g. artwork, airplanes, precious metals and stones) to be resold for payment by check or bank transfer.
Physically smuggling currency out of the country.
Carrying out complex layers of transactions to disguise the audit trail (this phase can involve such transactions as wire transfer of deposited cash into monetary instruments such as bonds, stocks, traveller's checks etc.).
Investment in real estate and legitimate businesses (using shell companies).
Make wealth derived from the illicit proceeds appear legitimate.
Methods used:
- using front companies to "lend" the proceeds back to the owner
- using deposit in foreign banks as security for domestic loans
- overinvoicing or producing false invoices for goods sold / supposedly sold across borders.

SOURCE: WORLD BANK STUDY

INQGRAPHIC: SBRAVO

How is money laundered?

Money laundering is done in three stages.

In the initial or "placement" stage, dirty money is introduced into the financial system by breaking up large amounts of cash into less conspicuous smaller sums. They are deposited directly into bank accounts, or are used to purchase a series of monetary instruments—checks, money orders—that are then collected and deposited into accounts in other locations.

After the funds have entered the financial system, the second stage called "layering" takes place. In this phase, a series of conversions or movements of the funds to distance them from their source is executed. The funds may be channeled through the purchase and sales of investment instruments, or simply wired through a series of accounts in various banks across the globe. This use of widely scattered accounts for laundering is especially prevalent in countries that do not cooperate in anti-money laundering investigations. In some instances, transfers are disguised as payments for goods or services, giving them a legitimate appearance.

In the third stage—"integration"—criminal profits re-enter the legitimate economy. These are invested into real estate, luxury assets or business ventures.

Money laundering occurs practically anywhere in the world. Generally, money launderers tend to seek out areas where there are low risks of detection due to weak or ineffective anti-money laundering programs. Because the objective of money laundering is to get the illegal funds back to the individuals who generated them, launderers usually prefer to move funds through areas with stable financial systems.

The Philippines

This is where the Philippines comes in.

The country has been placed in a blacklist drawn up by the world's biggest economies to identify areas they consider as "havens" for money launderers.

The Financial Action Task Force believes that the Philippines has been unwilling to help it with its efforts to check the movement of dirty money in its financial system. It is particularly riling over the fact that money launderers have been able to take advantage of the Philippines' bank secrecy law to hide their loot.

To appease the FATF, the Macapagal administration is working on getting Congress to approve an anti-money laundering law before Sept. 30. The chance of beating this deadline, however, is slim. Congress is set to go on recess on Sept. 7 to 23, and it hasn't even touched the bill drafted by an inter-agency task force formed by President Macapagal-Arroyo.

This early, lawmakers are deeply divided over the anti-money laundering bill. Some are peeved that Congress is being blackmailed by the FATF, saying the Philippines should not be bullied into changing its laws simply to satisfy countries that can't deal with their own problems. Most, however, are asking: Who will this law really serve?

Opposition lawmakers warn that an anti-money laundering law will be nothing more than a weapon that the state can use to silence its enemies. They argue that such a law will allow the government to pry open the accounts of its critics and harass them with trumped-up charges or bleed their finances dry. They add that with a law that eases banking restrictions, businessmen who are perceived to be unfriendly or uncooperative can be arm-twisted into supporting the government's agenda.

These concerns have become particularly glaring in view of the government's efforts to pin money laundering charges on Sen. Panfilo Lacson, an ally of deposed President Joseph Estrada and now a key figure in the opposition. Lacson is being accused of stashing millions of dollars in illegal drug money in several accounts abroad.

Sanctions are real

But those defending the anti-money laundering bill insist there is no political agenda behind it. The sanctions poised by the FATF, they argue, are real and should not be taken lightly.

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas and the Bankers Association of the Philippines have warned that the Philippines runs the risk of crippling its own economy unless it passes an anti-money laundering law by Sept. 30.

"Scrutiny of bank transactions would be worse without the law because foreign banks would require local banks for various information about the sender or receiver of money," Bangko Sentral Governor Rafael Buenaventura said. "Even an ordinary transaction would go through a rigorous process, paralyzing business and the economy."

Buenaventura said the FATF's sanctions could hamper transactions that could prevent overseas Filipino workers from remitting their dollar-denominated salaries to their families here.

He added that without an anti-money laundering law, companies here would find it difficult to borrow money abroad and would have to deal with wider spreads because of the perceived risks attached to the country's sovereign borrowings.

The central bank had said some banks in the United States had already indicated plans to stop processing transactions of Philippine banks because of the higher cost and inconvenience involved when dealing with a country in the FATF's list.

Safeguards

To appease critics, anti-money laundering advocates point out that the bill drafted by the Macapagal administration actually restrains the government from indiscriminately prying into banking records.

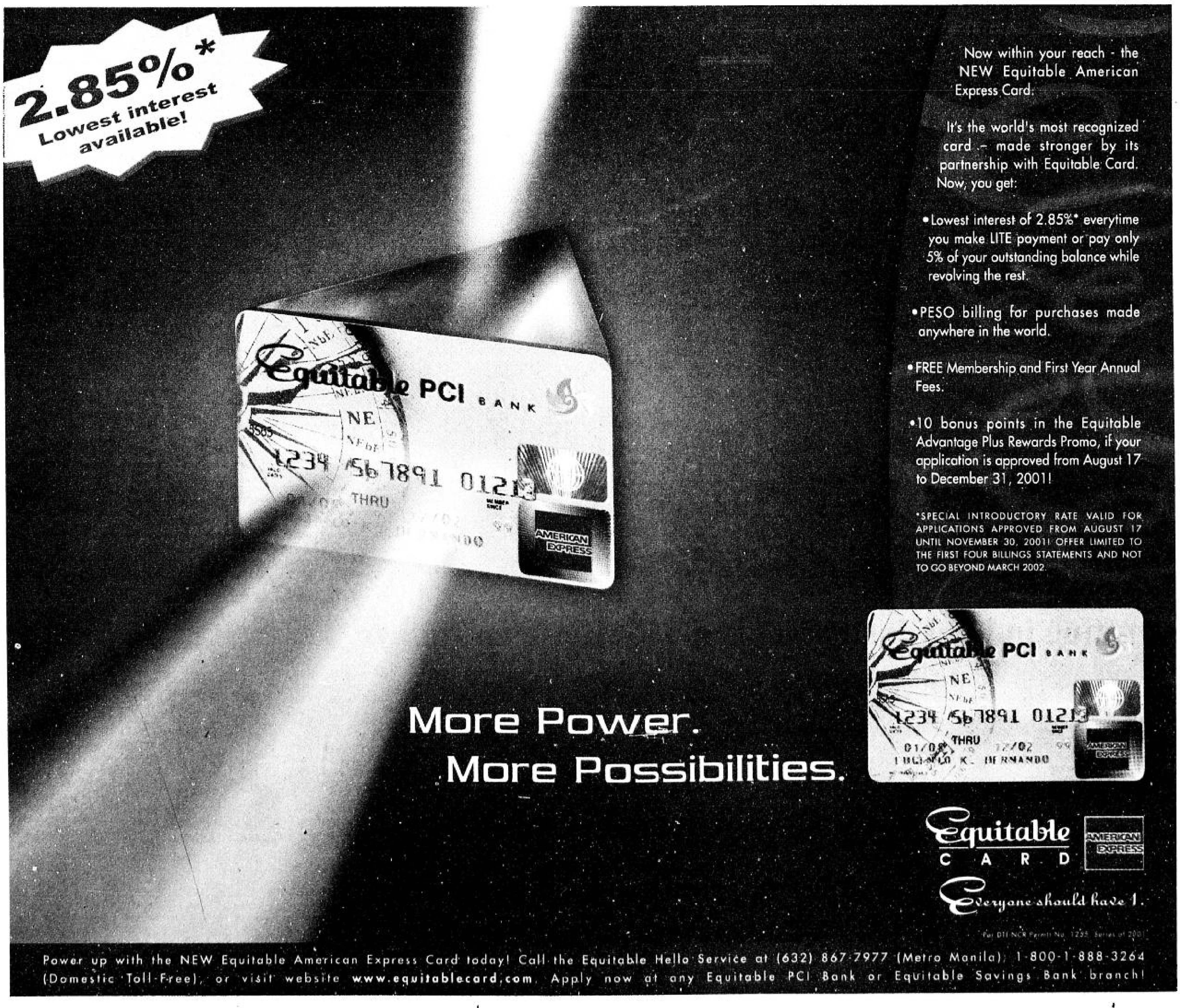
Transactions worth less than P500,000 are excluded, and any investigation cannot begin without the approval of both the Monetary Board, the central bank's policy-making body, and the National Anti-Money Laundering Board, a new agency that will be created once Congress approves the administration's proposed anti-money laundering law.

The anti-money laundering board will have four permanent members with a tenure of six years, and five ex-officio members: the justice, finance, local government and foreign secretaries, and the central bank governor. These people will have jurisdiction over companies regulated by the central bank, Securities and Exchange Commission, Cooperative Development Authority, Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp., Games and Amusement Board, Department of Tourism, Housing and Land Use Regulatory Board, and the Insurance Commission.

The anti-money laundering board will have the power to "stop, block, suspend or temporarily place under its control" questionable accounts for 10 days. The government can then file a case in court within 10 days to seize these accounts.

However, the anti-money laundering bill imposes stiff penalties on unlawful tip-offs and bars the use of information gathered in any investigation to prosecute tax-related cases.

There is legitimate concern that the anti-money laundering law may be exploited to silence the government's critics. Without the law, however, there is the real danger that the domestic economy, still reeling from the 1997-98 Asian financial crisis and now being battered by a global economic slowdown, may slow down to a crawl. Ultimately, the issue will be a choice of the lesser evil.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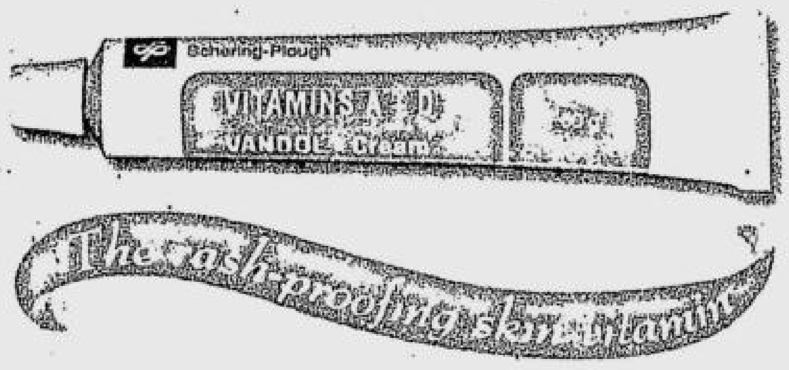

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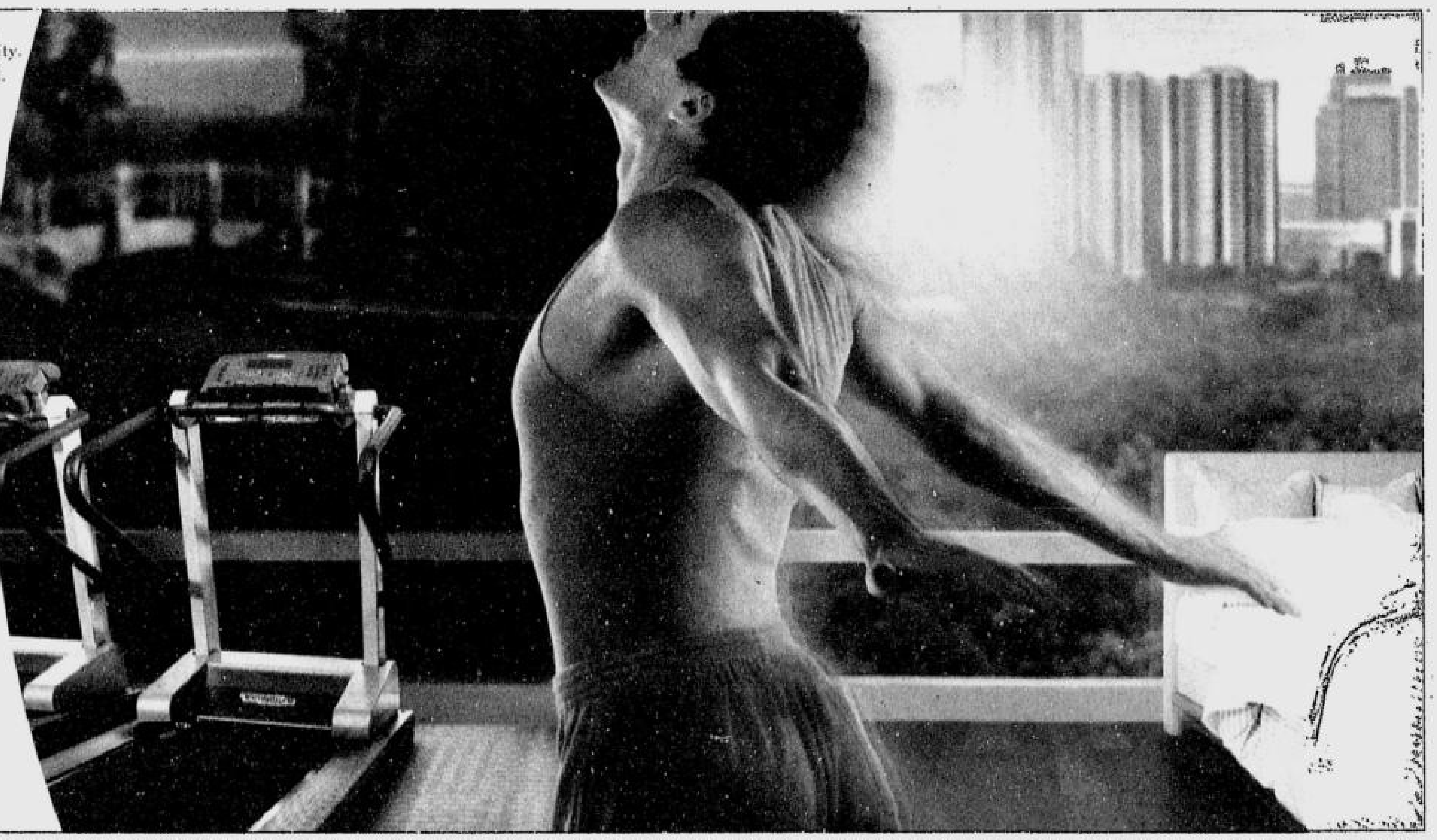

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The nonstop headhunt for high-fashion superstars

Louis Vuitton Moët Henessy and the Gucci Group are fighting for world fashion supremacy

LOCATION: Monte Carlo, that sunny place for shady people.

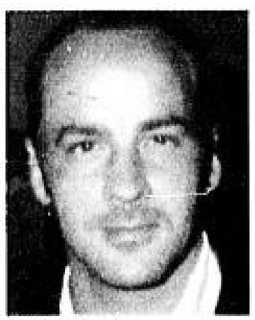
Time: Summer 2000.

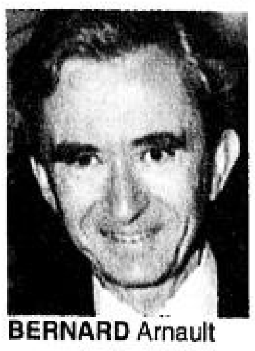
Occasion: A beautiful gala dinner usual for such a place and such a time.

Alexander McQueen, then head designer for the Louis Vuitton Moët Henessy-owned House of Givenchy, requests Domenico de Sole, president of the Gucci Group, for a photo together. The latter obliges.

At the time, McQueen was far from being in good terms with the Gucci Group. The designer had accused LVMH of neglecting Givenchy's ready-to-wear line. On the other hand, LVMH had branded the Brit as "unmanageable." The spring-summer haute couture line, scheduled for showing last January, was to be McQueen's last for the Givenchy label. In short, the extension of his contract was simply out of the question.

Meanwhile, a meeting was arranged with De Sole in London. Finally, on Dec. 4, 2000, three months after that opportunistic photo-op in Monaco, a contract with Gucci was signed, granting McQueen financing for a line with his label. This gave McQueen the opportunity to resign from the LVMH group a month before the presentation of what was to be his last collection for Givenchy.


TOM Ford


BERNARD Arnault

YVES Carcelle

ALEXANDER McQueen

Soon after, 32-year-old Hedi Slimane, designer for the St. Laurent menswear since 1996, resigned from his post, explaining he could not accept the fact that Tom Ford was supervising his work. Dior tracked him down in Berlin and offered him the label's men's line. Naturally, he accepted.

Ford's power

The French daily Le Figaro has reported how these events show the continuous headhunting and pirating in the world of high fashion. The rivalry of the two houses is not expected to end soon. Both groups have different visions and objectives in the luxury market.

At Gucci, Tom Ford is not simply a designer. He also runs the group together with De Sole. The 41-year-old Texan, a graduate of architecture and art history from the Parsons School of Design, was a breath of fresh air at Gucci. Not only does he insist on a modern design, but he also considers the demands of the global market.

Ever since he took over as artistic director in 1994, Ford has been responsible for the group's evolution: boutiques, show windows, image building, etc. He is also a member of its ruling group, taking a hand in all the decisions such as the takeovers of YSL and Bucheron, for instance. He was responsible for the "acquisition" of Nicolas Ghesquiere of Balenciaga, as well as Stella McCartney, who—while creating designs for Chloe—was offered to launch her own label with the Gucci Group. Ford, too, had a big hand in the entry of McQueen to Gucci.

In London, Ford works for Gucci. In Paris, he works for Yves St. Laurent. "When I go through the tunnel in the Eurostar, I immediately change personalities. I feel different in Paris and in London," he explains.

Rigid process

Policies are different over at LVMH. This giant luxury conglomerate grants autonomy to the different fashion houses under it.

"Each label is fragile," explains Yves Carcelle, executive director of the fashion and leathergoods departments. "They each have a certain territory and a life of their own."

Choosing a designer for each house is a rigid process. A group of professionals in the fashion industry drafts a short list of five or six designers of different nationalities. Then, three other people decide which candidate would probably make it. The name is eventually given to the president of the house in question (be it Kenzo, Celine or Givenchy.) However, it is Carcelle and Bernard Arnault, LVMH's head honcho, who have the final say.

"The president of LVMH (Arnault) and his wife came to New York on different occasions to see me," Marc Jacobs, the designer of Louis Vuitton, says. "They went through the clothes I made and they liked what they saw because they were simple, luxurious and young. There was nothing avant-garde. When he signed me in, Arnault did not give me any conditions. He only said one word: 'Go!'"

Creating an image

However, it takes five months of discussion to draw up the contract, a little more time to fully comprehend the label's "territory" (meaning the world of travel), and to create an image.

"The task of choosing a designer depends on the label's territory," says Carcelle. Dior, a legendary name, may have a designer who continuously shocks. What is important is that the whole world constantly talks about it and the creations surpass all frontiers.

Not to be hindered by its past, Givenchy, on the contrary, embodies the elegance of a French fashion house.

"Julien McDonald is totally capable of understanding the Givenchy image," says Carcelle. It is not surprising that for his first collection, the house has returned to its more subdued look.

Celine for its part reflects sportswear chic worn on Palm Beach, Saint Barth or St. Moritz: The designer must be American.

Colors that keep the sun-kissed glow

THE GLOWING tan, popular in the '70s, is back in style. T. LeClerc's Brillantisme collection is a festival of pastel colors in sheer, transparent tones for a natural, sophisticated look. Focusing on the eyes and lips, Brillantisme offers sparkling shades of lavender, pink and frosty green.

Powders that even out the tan and give the skin a healthy glow are also included in the collection.

Brillantisme features three shades of powder eye shadow that can be mixed and matched for day or evening wear. Black mascara completes the look.

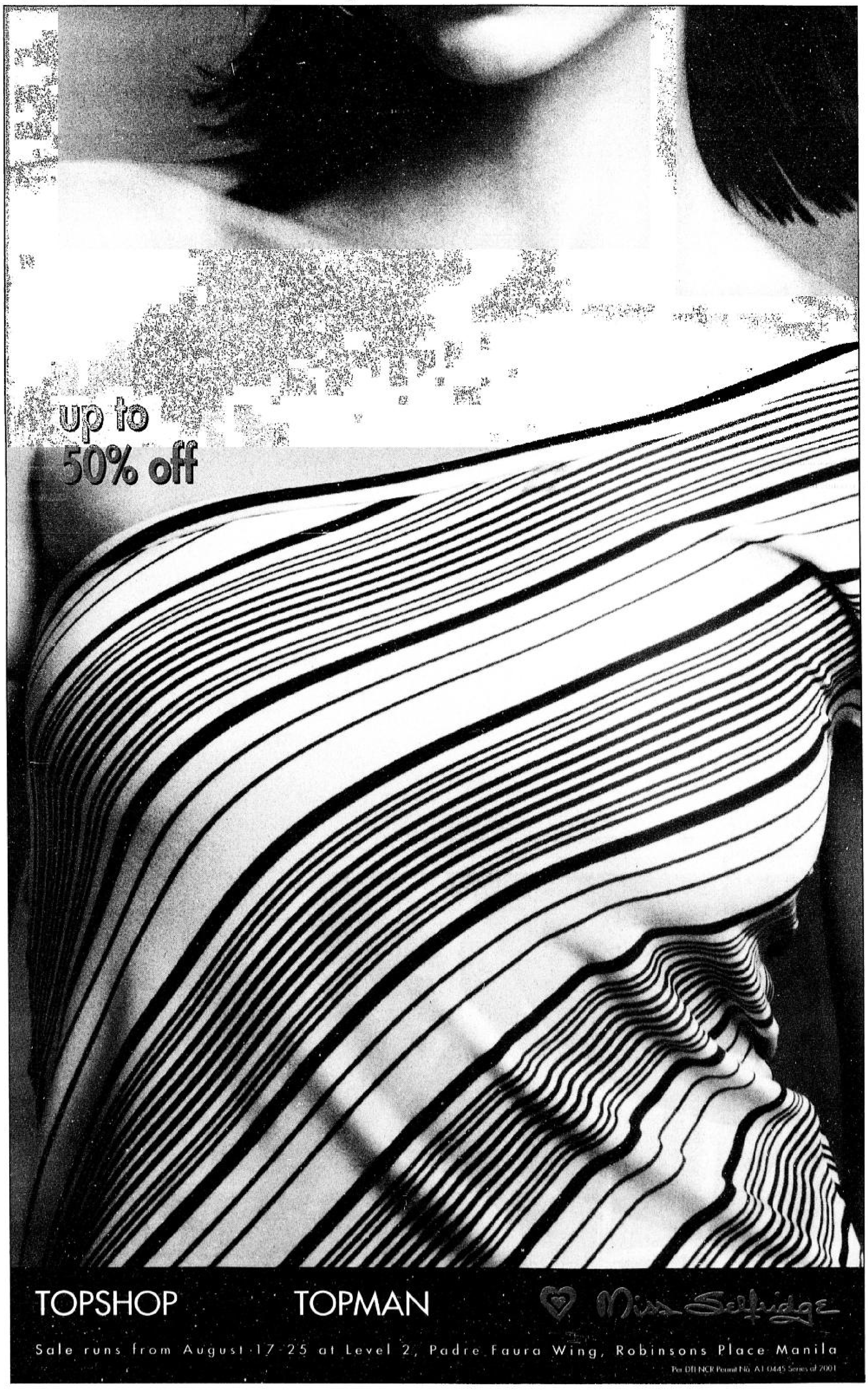
Rose Paillettes, a lip gloss with a refreshing pink shade, can be used to get a transparent and natural effect for the lips. The lip gloss has a smooth texture that allows it to slide over the lips for a natural finish.

For an even complexion, Soleil powder gives that iridescent glow with warm shimmering shades of copper.

T. LeClerc's full range of cosmetic products are available at Essenses in Rustan's Makati.

BESSIE Badilla del-Castillo in bloom

PHOTO BY WAHOO GUERRERO
MAKEUP BY VICTOR ORTEGA
FOR EMPHASIS SALON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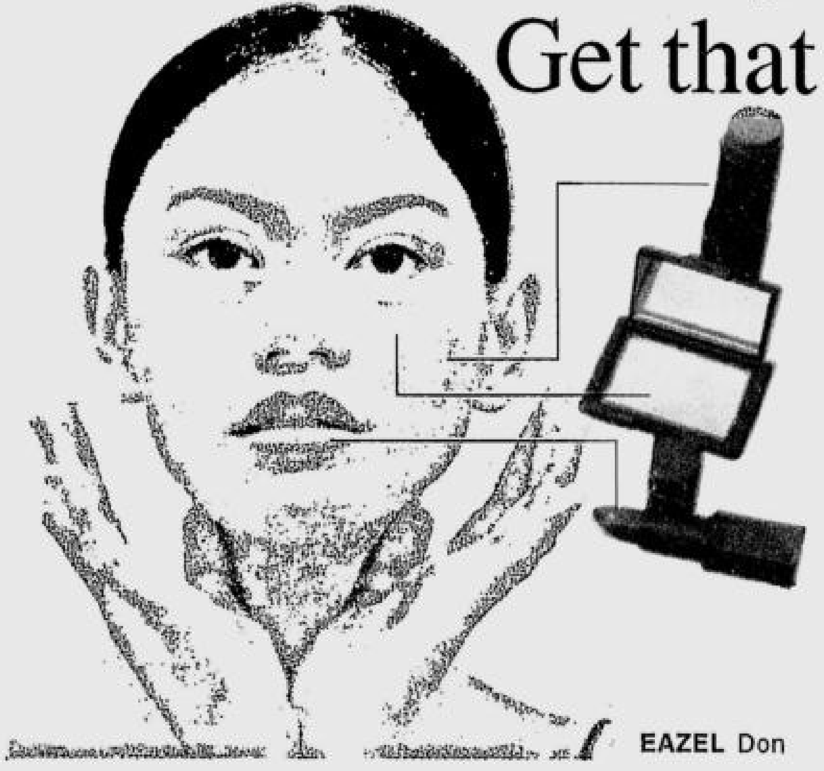

EAZEL Don

FRANÇOIS Nars is famous for his brilliant inventiveness, boldness, understanding of color, either vivid or subtle, and the integration of beauty with a unique approach. His makeup looks good enough to eat.

His latest collection exudes an ethereal quality. The colors are warm and shimmery. Lips are colored in peach-apricot and the cheeks are in pale pinks and silvery beige. The eyes are in warm buff or faun colors with a hint of pastel. Charade is the alternative to the smoky eye effect.

The Blue Lotus eye pencil, a cross between lapis lazuli and cobalt, is a mainstay as it opens the eye and draws attention to it.

Nars' makeup lets the everyday girl metamorphose into a beauteous spirit.

PHOTOS BY CHITO VECINA
PICTORIAL DIRECTION BY ALBERT AVELLANA
MAKEUP BY TOTO BAGAMASBAD

Originating new colors

SMOKEY eyes and stained lips will be the look for the coming holiday season, according to Origins. It's about intense colors and smudged dark pencils on the eye and lip colors that range from deep pink to burgundy.

As part of its full service to the customer, Origins has just launched its cosmetic range at Rustan's. The products contain skin-friendly ingredients for which the brand is known. In keeping with its philosophy of using natural pigments, the color range focused on earth tones and neutrals.

Origins relaunched its coloring range as a response to the market demand. With the burst of color in the fashion scene after a decade of minimalism, Origins has five ranges, which now include green and purple palettes. Customers are also given advice on how color and the makeup influence your moods. If you're attracted to warm colors such as red/orange, then you are self-confident and outgoing. A powerful red lip color should call attention to you. Wine/violet shades are associated with spirituality and intuition. Coral/peach shades are for the adventurous, and are popular during the vacation months. Beige/browns signify conservatism, stability and attention to detail. Women in the workplace favor these shades. Pink/rose shades bring out the romantic in you, and are usually favored by idealistic young women. Origins dual powder-foundation has an extensive range of colors that will suit dark complexions. They come in such shades as teak, cocoa, praline and cedar.

Among its innovations are the As Good As it Gets powder which when mixed with a moisturizer can be used as a foundation and concealer. On its own it's a great finishing powder. The Liquid Lip Color is a high-shine gloss and lipstick that provides a refreshing sensation with its cool mint taste. If you're tired, the Eye Brightening Color stick in pale blue reflects the white of the eye to wake you up. The formula is water-resistant for all-day wear.

DRAMATIC

Foundation: As Good As It Gets powdered makeup in Sesame (P1,200)
Powder: Original Skin Pressed Makeup in Sesame (P1,350)
Eyebrows: Just Browsing brow-shaping color in Soft Brown (P720)
Eye shadow: Sandstorm (P750), Natural Instinct (P750)
Eye Pencil: Cocoa (P810)
Lashes: Underwear for Lashes lash primer (P720), Fringe Benefits mascara in Brown (P720)
Blush: Brushing Color in Sugar Cookie (P990)
Lip Pencil: Nutshell (P660)
Lipstick: Creamy Lip Color in Nut Case (P720)
Lip Gloss: Bite Your Lips in Just Bitten Brownberry (P750)
Loose Powder: As Good As It Gets powdered makeup in Sesame (P1,200)

SPORTY LOOK

Foundation: Original Skin Most Coverage liquid foundation in Linen (P900)
Powder: Original Skin Pressed Makeup in Sesame (P1,350)
Eyebrows: Just Browsing brow-shaping color in Soft Black (P720)
Eye shadow: Vanilla Mousse (P750), Adobe (P750)
Eye Pencil: Jet (P810)
Lashes: Underwear for Lashes lash primer (P720), Fringe Benefits mascara in Black (P720)
Blush: Brush-On Color in Crimson and Clover (P990)
Lip Pencil: Rose (P660)
Lipstick: Lasting Lip Color in Intense Berry (P720)
Lip Gloss: Liquid Lip Color in Hot Date (P660)
Loose Powder: As Good As It Gets powdered makeup in Sesame (P1,200)

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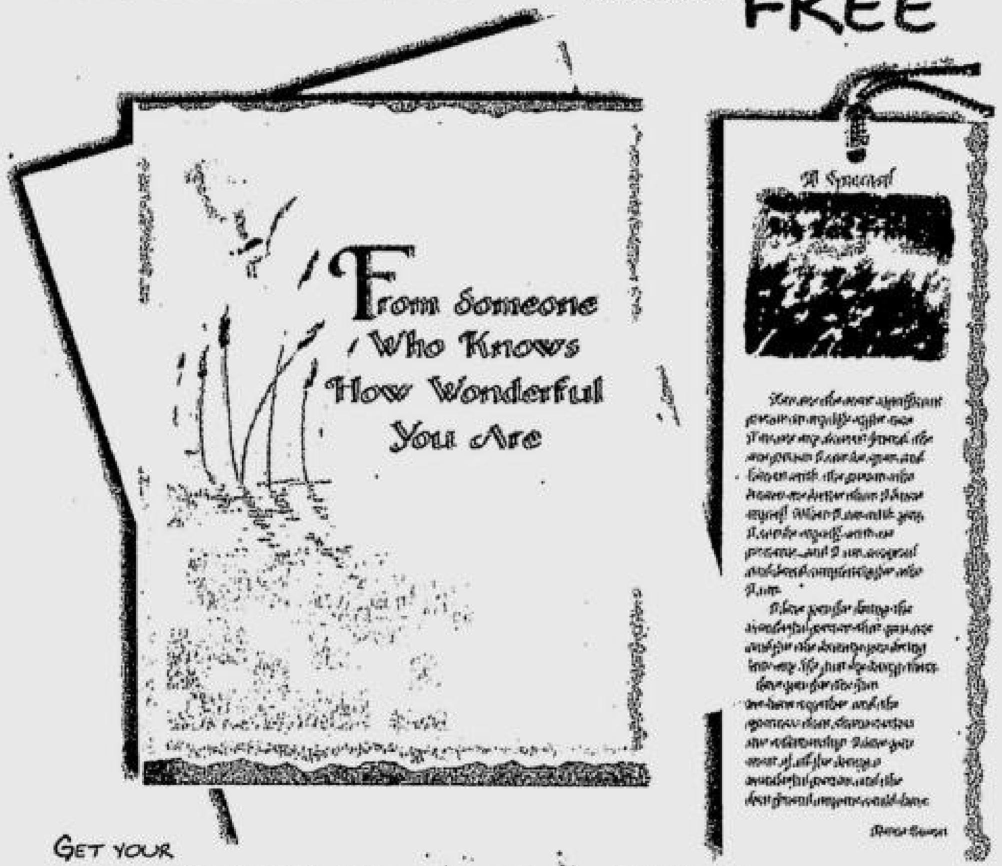

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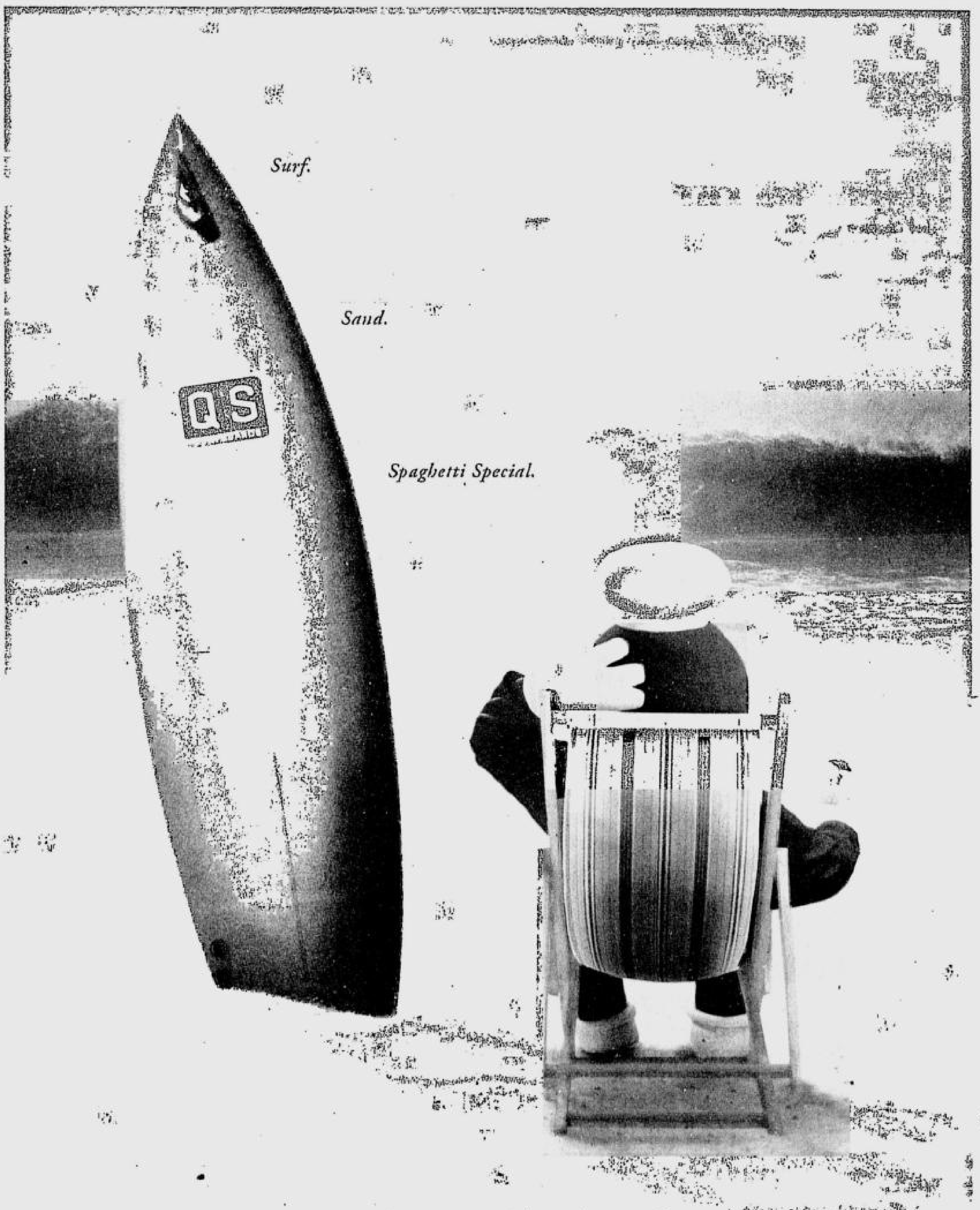
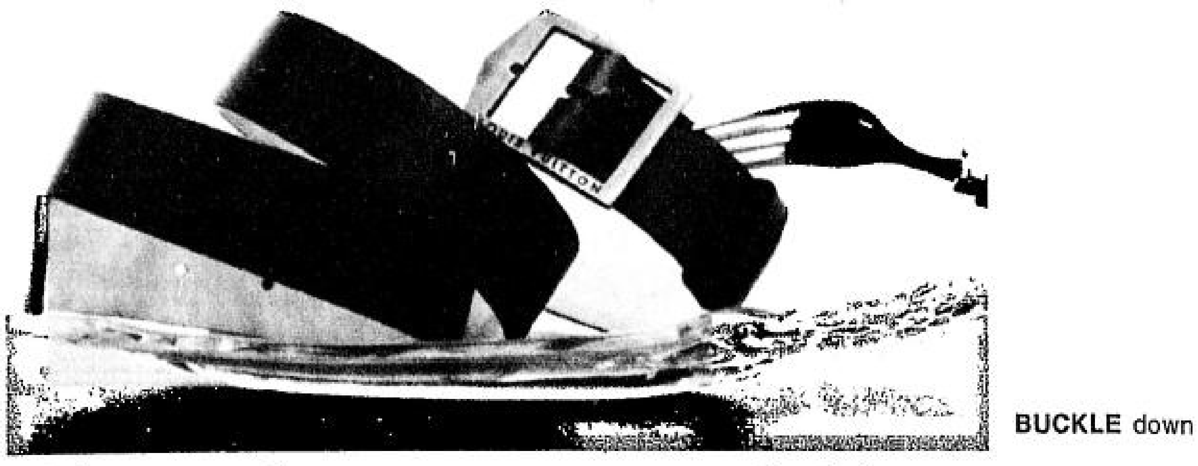


May Jollibee na sa Surigao Del Norte, ang surfing capital ng Pilipinas!
Ito ay matatagpuan sa San Nicolas corner Rizal Streets, Surigao City.

Kaya pagkatapos lumusong sa malalaking alon,
magtampisaw sa katangi-tanging langhap-sarap ng Jollibee!

Saan ka man anurin, may Jollibee pa rin!

Jollibee.



BUCKLE down

Gentleman, soldier and athlete in one shoe

Photos by Chito Vecina
Pictorial direction by Albert Avellana

ENCOMPASSING the tailored sophistication of a Victorian gentleman, the precision of a soldier's uniform and the casual attitude of an athlete, Louis Vuitton's footwear collection for Fall/Winter 2001-2002 reflects the elegance and modernity of today's men.

One of four lines that make up the collection, the Catwalk Range was inspired by the Victorian gentleman's wardrobe. It features three loafers, each with elongated shapes and sophisticated details. The black patent stretch loafer, for example, is a new classic that is perfectly worn with eveningwear or as an unusual addition to a more casual look. Another loafer, in mocha or black goatskin suede, has a buckle that provides the perfect finishing touch and has been designed to provide much comfort.

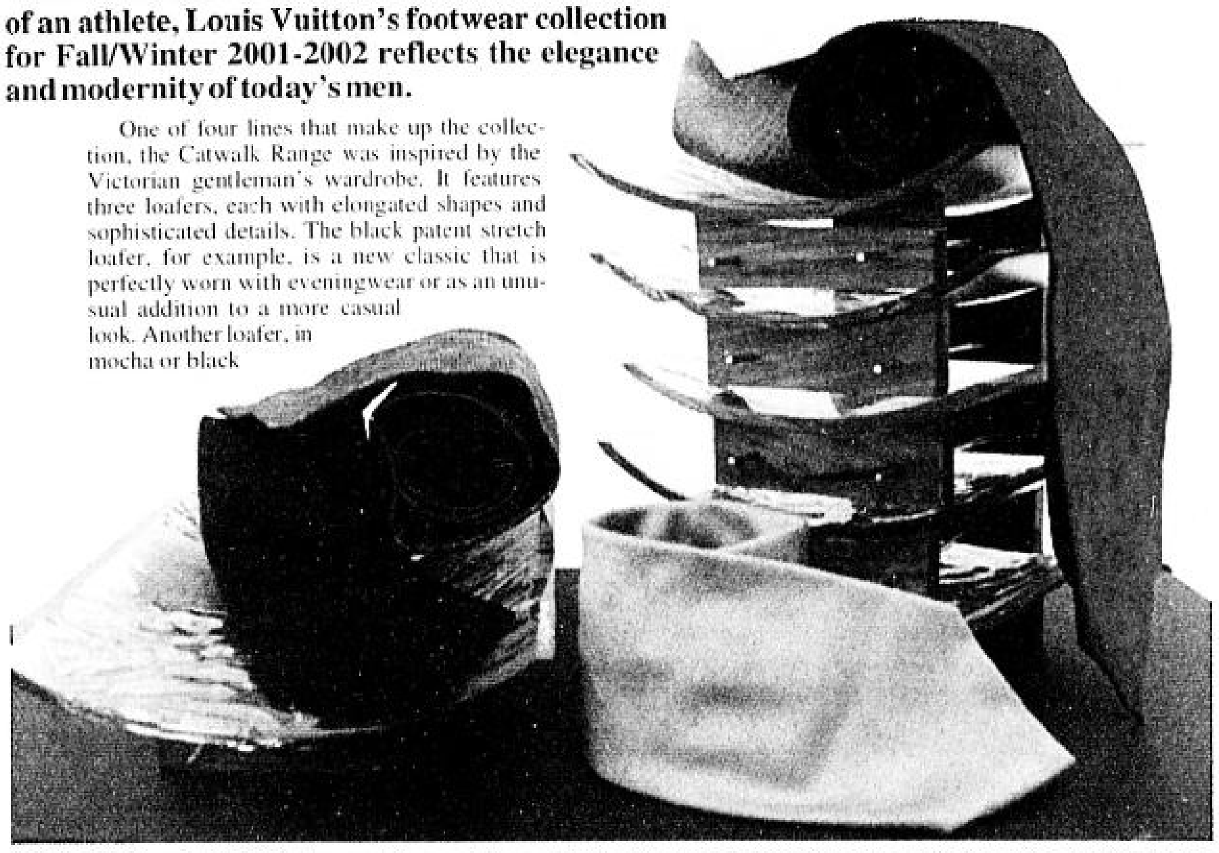
The third loafer, in black box calf, has an ultra-modern side closure and a discreetly monogrammed stirrup buckle. All three models have an embossed leather square near the heel.

For more casual wear, Louis Vuitton has created sports-inspired shoes. One takes its silhouette from turn-of-the-century football shoes, which were worn with long laces tied around the foot. This modern version, in black or mocha leather, has a retro appearance but is a technical breakthrough that combines a natural leather sole with squai. rubber studs that evoke the Damier motif.

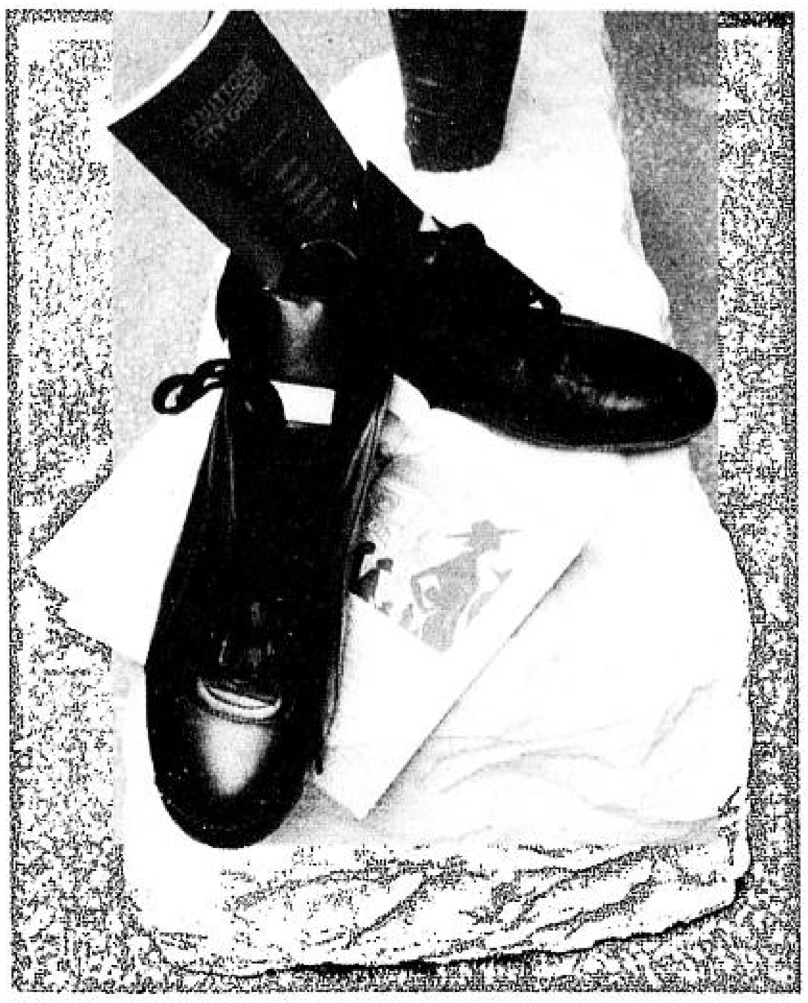
Also sporty is Louis Vuitton's leather trainer, available in black, mocha and aubergine. The shoe boasts an elongated shape highlighted by geometric lines that have been topstitched throughout the shoe. Other sports-inspired details include the rubber logo on the tongue and a metal lace tag.

Last but not least are the military-theme boots. In black or mocha leather, with gunmetal buckles, the boots have Goodyear stitched construction and like the best military wear, are comfortable and durable.

In the Philippines, Louis Vuitton is located at 6750 Ayala Ave., Makati City. Visit www.vuitton.com.

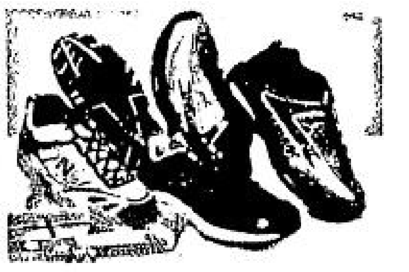


LOUIS Vuitton's Fall-Winter neckties opt for a dominant monochromatic color scheme. The motifs range from monograms and raced pattern of the letters. The ties have an all-silk facing that runs down the tie's length, making it pleasant to handle. A loop label with the LV logo holds the rear and front aprons together, while the logo is delicately woven on the rear apron. The slip-stitched seam closes the tie, ending in a yellow, saddle-stitched bar tack. This allows the tie to hold its shape after use.



SPORTS-INSPIRED shoes

CLASSIC patent leather loafers



Aiming for No. 3

NEW Balance, the American athletic footwear brand that has specialized in arch supports and orthopedic shoes since 1906, is aiming to become No. 3 slot in the $1.3-billion athletic footwear retail industry this year. New Balance is available at major department stores and sports shops nationwide: The Athlete's Foot, Planet Sports, SM Department Store, Robinsons Department Store, Olympic Village, Royal Sporting House and the New Balance freestanding store in Festival Supermall, Filinvest Alabang.

Shoes for rainy days

TRAFFIC has introduced a new line of imported men's shoes suitable for the rainy season.

It offers boots in different styles and cuts. Shoe brands like BCBG by Max Azria and Robert Wayne (US), BKR (Spain), and More or Less (Italy) have rubber soles to withstand rain and flood. Visit Traffic stores at the G/F Power Plant Mall, Rockwell; G/F Virra Mall, Greenhills, and 2/L New Expansion Wing of Alabang Town Center.

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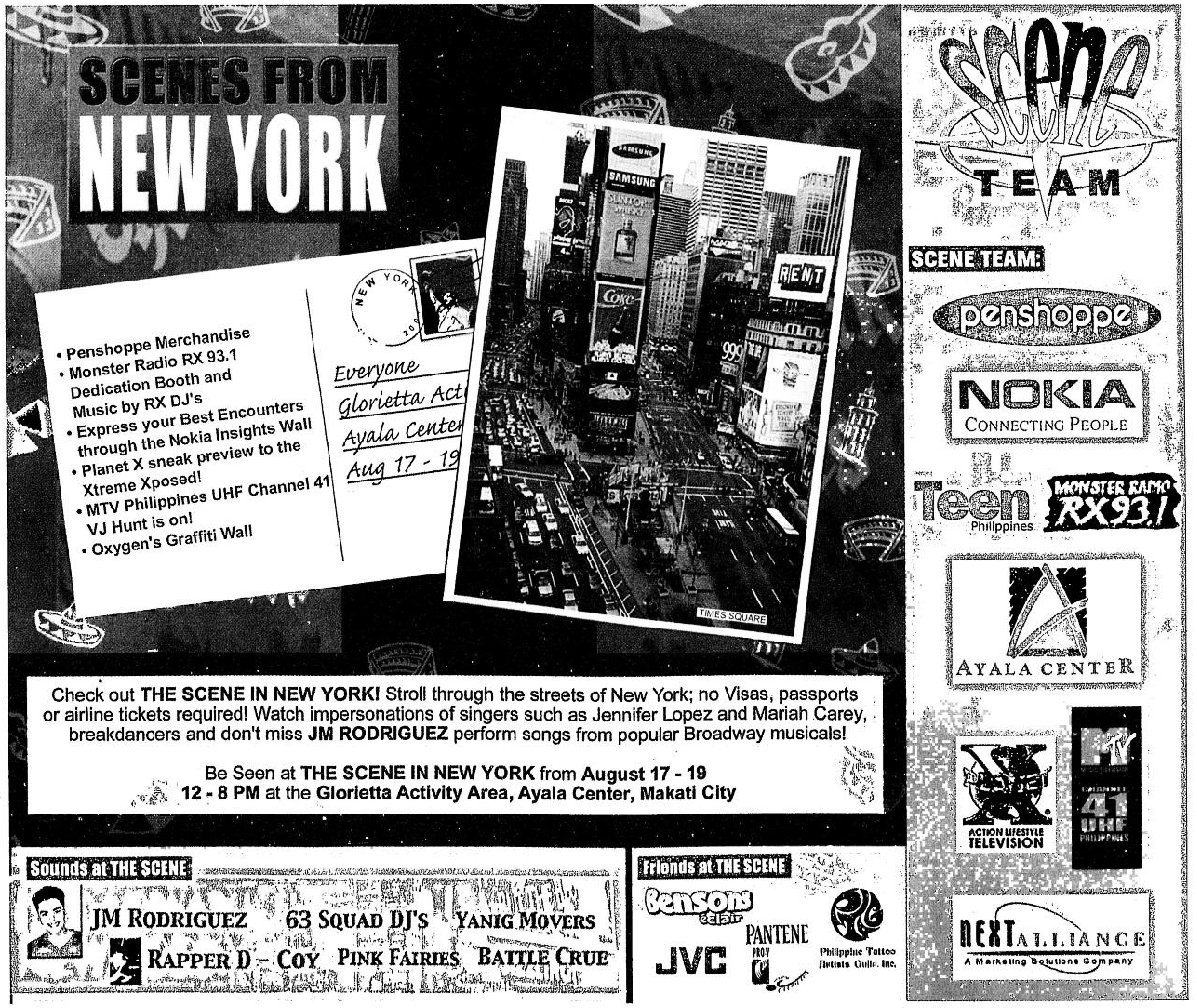

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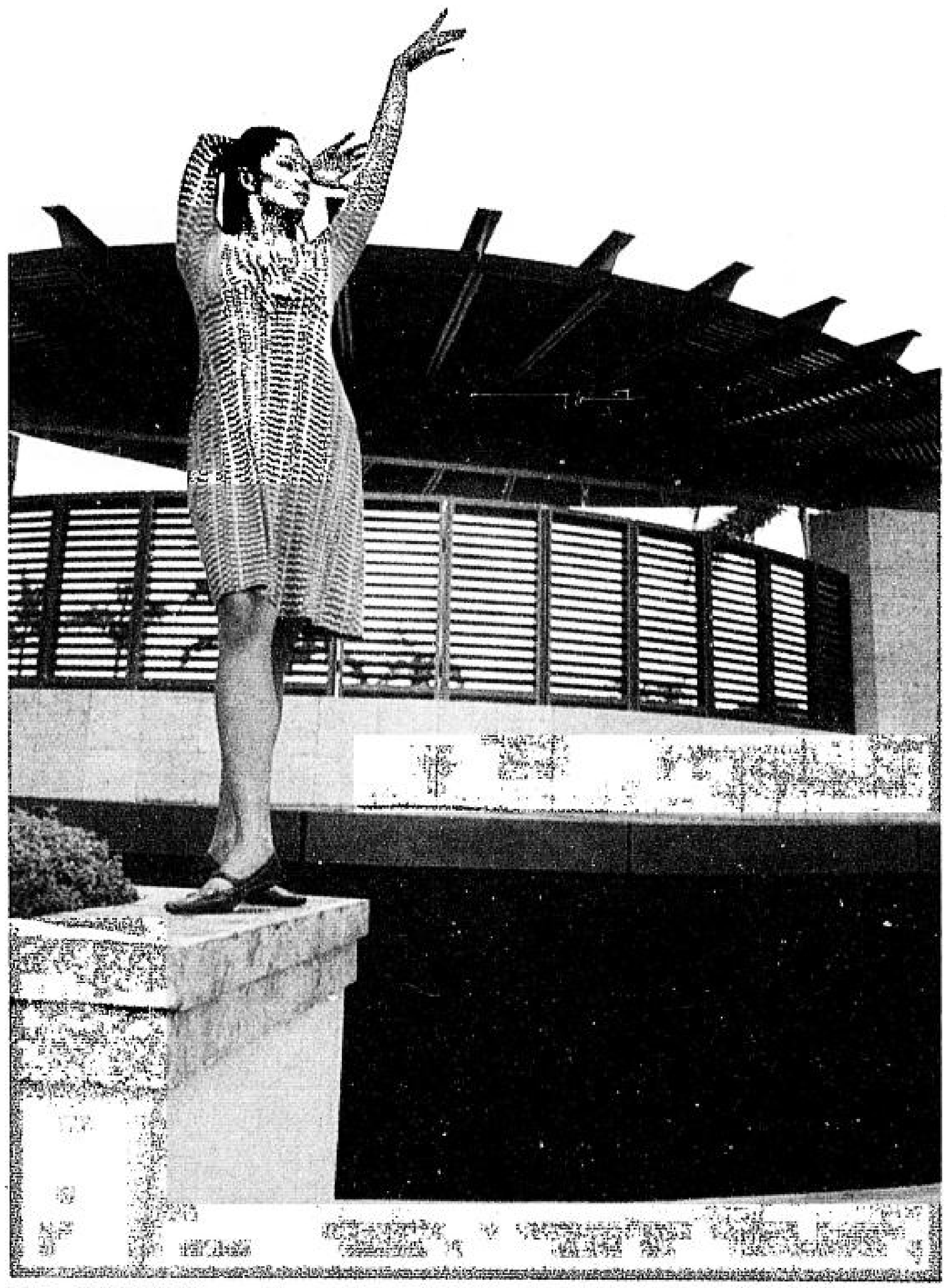

FOR A YOUTHFUL appearance, wear clothes with three-quarter sleeves and a swing cut such as this purple dress by Laundry and unusually colored shoes such as the purple pumps with saddle stitches by Lady Rustan.

BESSIE Badilla-del Castillo looks polished in a classic polo pantsuit by BCBG.

Ageless clothes, ageless you

BY MARGE C. ENRIQUEZ
PHOTOS BY WAHOO GUERRERO

WHEN I am inundated by media images of youth and slimness, I feel that they portray a superficial view that life ends at age 30. Occasionally, there are features and pictorials on mature women, but they seem to be more like token pieces. Most of the articles on beauty focus on its deterioration through time rather than on the achievements of maturity. Because of misleading media images, younger readers get the wrong notion that turning 40, 50 or 60

AGELESS/p.D6

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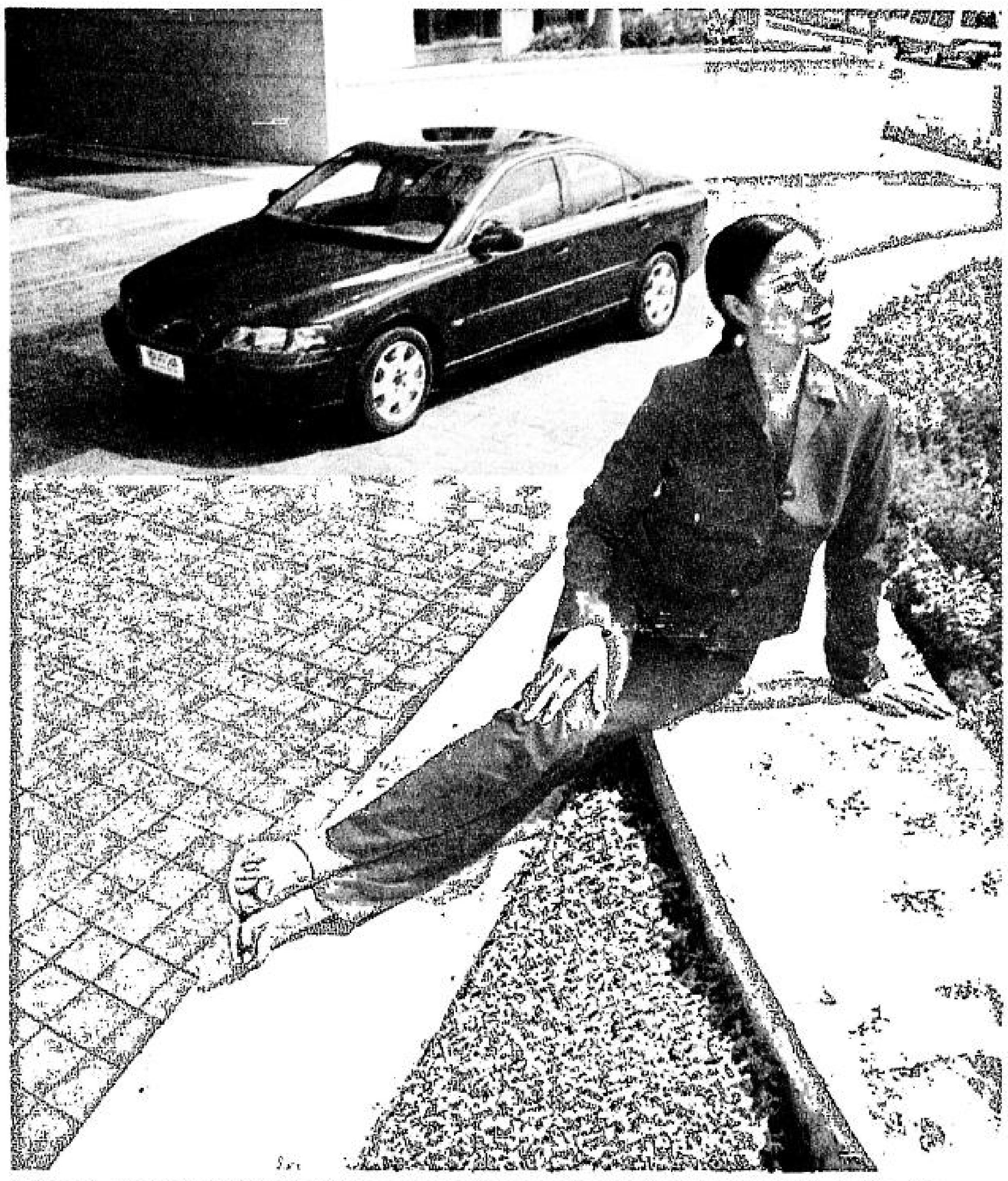
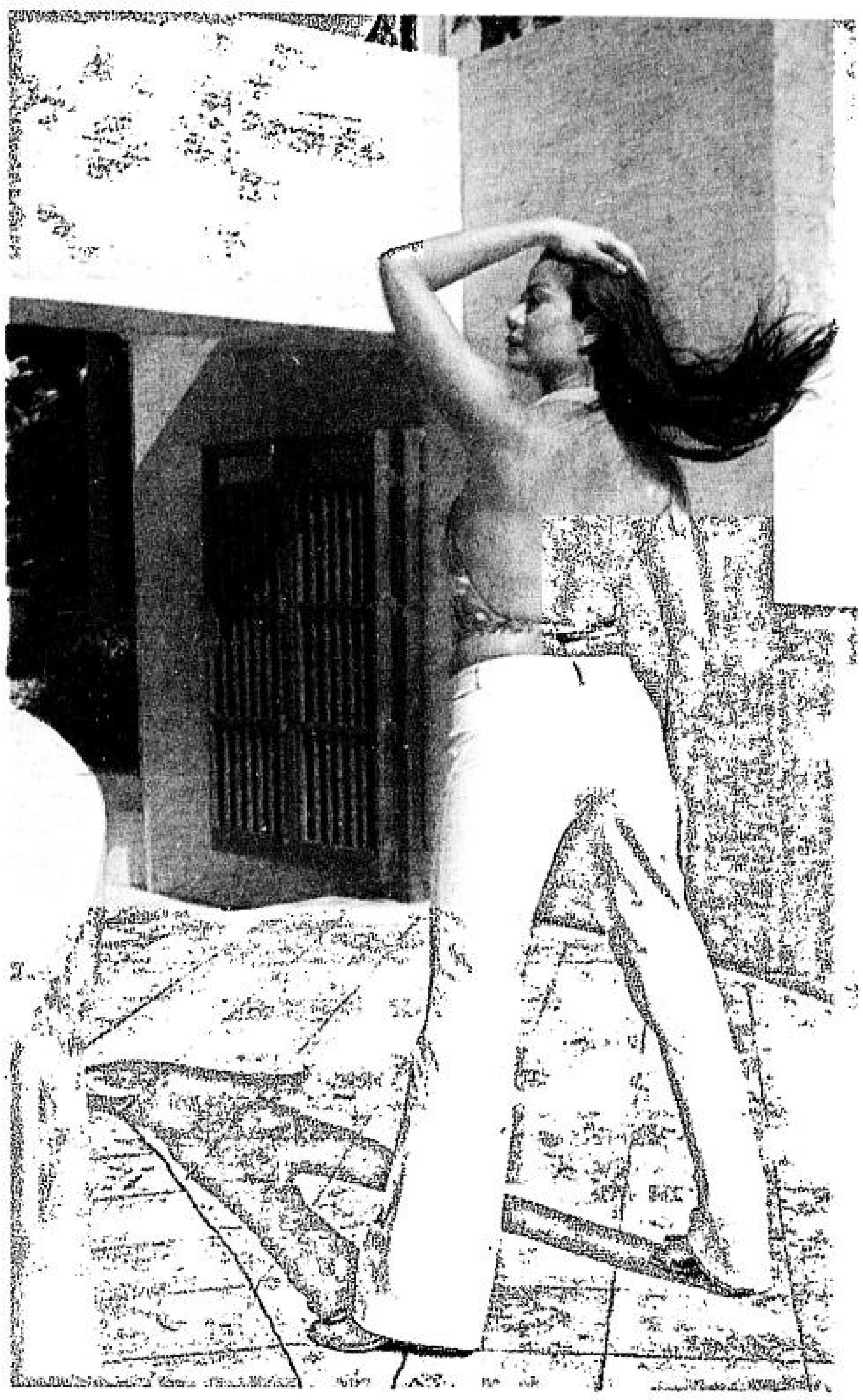


FUCHSIA pantsuit by Carmelo gives a sleek and polished look. The darting details on the side lengthen the legs. Instead of plain, basic pumps, wear shell and leather mules by Pedro Garcia.

Let your
fashion
reflect
the passage
and the rich
harvest
of time



UPDATE last season's tropical-printed green chiffon halter by pairing it with polyester khakis. Both from BCBG

Ageless clothes, ageless you

(From page D5)

is something to be feared. These images present a viewpoint that life is a sequence of rise and fall, not an endlessly repetitious wave. Against the bias of the media, we must realize that each passing day, week, month or year is something to look forward to.

Our view of maturity or aging is a human invention letting us believe that the flow of life is measurable. We can't be satisfied simply to live: we feel the pressure to quantify our past and our future, using clocks, calendars and even media stereotypes of youth and beauty to advance our realities. The problem is that our sensitivity to time and to society's perception of youth holds back our capacity to live in the moment.

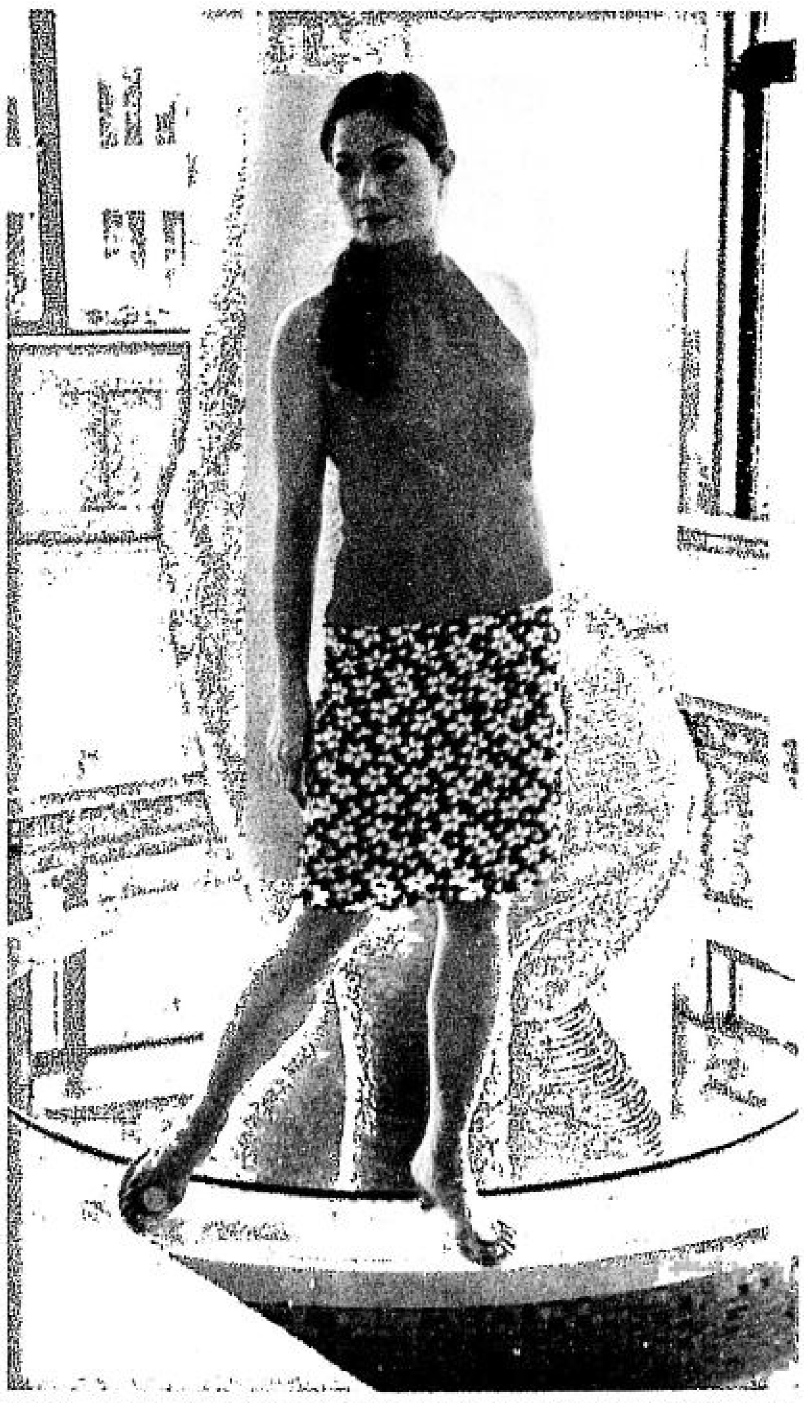
We can stretch out our sense of time's artificiality and learn to enjoy life the way a connoisseur appreciates music. Feel each passage as it happens, without of course ignoring that the worth of the music lies in the total experience. When the performance is over, the music doesn't die, and we don't wrack our minds to live through it again. Music is like life. Each passage is savored for what it is, yet the sense of its wholeness is the most significant.

Life after 40 is like the autumn or the pre-holiday season. It makes us aware of how time has passed in order for us to appreciate how the seeds planted early on have grown. There is no reason to fear or to be unhappy with the passage of time. When the past flows, it must not be permitted to collect in a container of regrets. Carrying this emotional baggage will only hinder our journey.

This is the time of harvesting the fruits of our experiences and preserving them to nurture us in tougher times. We mustn't forget the sources of life within the fruits. Their seeds will sprout into new plants next year, after a period of dormancy. This is life—an endless cycle of time.

For this pictorial, style arbiter Rina Go styles former model Bessie Badilla-del Castillo, who looks great at 43. Previously, women over 40 were labeled as "forgotten women." Advertisers and retailers have been alienating this market (unless their products are antiaging). But life after 40, 50, 60, etc. is a time to enjoy.

"At that age, she shouldn't let go. It's important to have love for yourself. Wear clothes that make you feel pretty," says Go. Women look younger in halter tops, low necklines, shirts with three-quarter sleeves, sleek denims and clothes with interesting details.



PERK up a basic beige-and-black polyblend skirt with a strong red halter top. Both from Easel

MODEL: BESSIE BADILLA-DEL CASTILLO
STYLING BY RINA GO
CLOTHES AND SHOES FROM RUSTAN'S
HAIR AND MAKEUP BY VICTOR ORTEGA FOR EMPHASIS SALON, ROCKWELL
LOCATION: ESSENSA, FORT BONIFACIO
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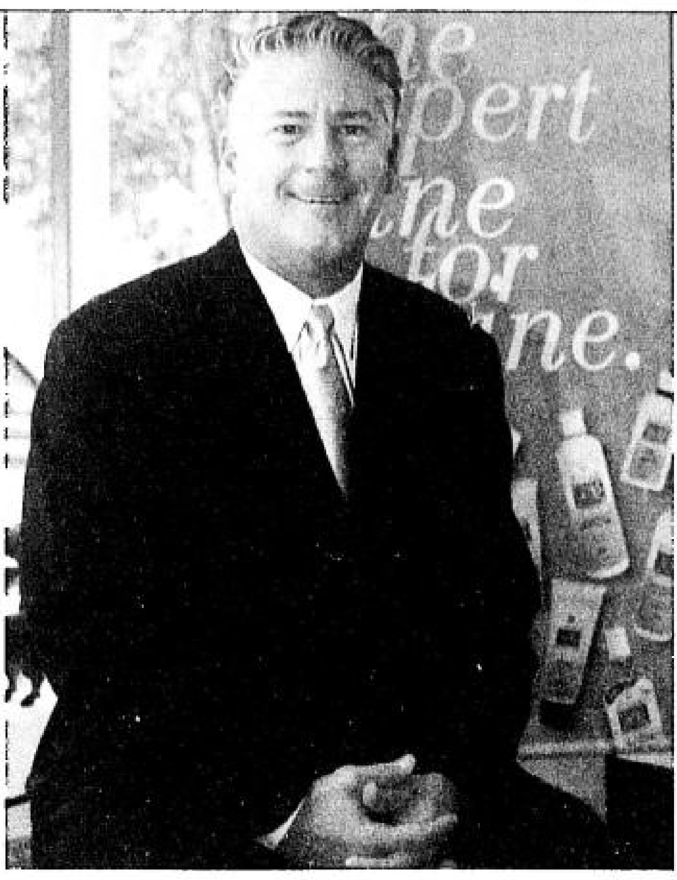


BAINBRIDGE says Citre Shine suits Asian hair.

PHOTO: ROMY HOMILLADA

Citrus-based hair-care brand squeezes into the local market

BARELY three weeks in Manila, one of America's top hair-care brands has been flying off the shelves. Citre Shine, the California-based line fortified with nutrients, exceeded the sales target thrice more than expected.

"We're out of treatments right now. They drive our line. We buy an enormous amount of silicone, which adds shine and smoothness to hair. Our treatments are second to none. If you get a treatment with the Shine Miracle Polisher or Shine Mist Spray Laminator, they breathe internally but also externally in the hair," explains Chris Bainbridge, the international sales manager of Advanced Research Laboratories.

ARL pioneered in essence purification, a vital shine-enhancing property. It is also the first company to launch unisex goods for fine, limp, thinning hair; full styling and conditioning products for ethnic hair and a complete range of anti-yellowing products for highlighted hair.

Citre Shine is positioned as a salon product sold at mass market prices. In the States, the products cost on the average $5.95 to $6.95. The local distributor, Rustan's Marketing Corp., priced the items at an average of P225 which makes Citre Shine cheaper here than in the States. The novelty and the affordable price got Filipinos excited that RMK has to replenish the shelves.

"In any country when there's a new brand, people will try it if it's competitive."

Bainbridge says the hair market is divided between the mass market and the exclusive salon brands. Citre Shine is packaged as a high-quality product fit for a salon but sold at drugstores, department stores and hypermarkets. Among its competitors are Pantene, Finesse and Herbal Essence.

Citre Shine is known for its trademarked purification process of citrus extracts, which extends the hair's ability to reflect and refract the light for lustrous locks. Citre Shine contains a patented formula, Therma-Shield, which safeguards the hair from heat.

If your hair is sun-damaged the Shine Mist Spray Laminator not only softens the hair without weighing it down; it also repairs the split ends. The Glossing Wax contains sunscreen to prevent oxidation. The citrus oils protect the hair by shutting out the oxygen as the ultra-violet filters dissipate the light.

Citre Shine has also made an impact in the gel category, the prices of which average P195.

Bainbridge says the packaging and wide distribution have contributed to the brand's success. He adds that free goods and buy-one, get-one promos have also helped push the sales. The company has done sponsorships to enhance its image and "to get out of its box."

Marge C. Enriquez

Expert holds hair growth consultation

A BEVERLY Hills-trained Filipino hair transplant surgeon is holding hair transplant consultations this month for people with hair growth problems.

Veteran hair restoration expert Andrew Pineda, M.D., a member of the International Society of Hair Restoration Surgeons, said the consultations on hair restoration techniques will be held at his clinics in Makati City (Suite 611 Medical Towers, Herrera Street, Legaspi Village, Makati City, tel. 813-0891; and Davao (2/F Galaxy Shopping Arcade, Ilustre Street, Davao City, tel. 221-2682).

Bridal fair in Midtown

THE PHILIPPINE Academy of Fashion Designers (PAFD) presents "I Do…," a bridal fair and exhibit from Sept. 29-30 at the Manila Midtown Hotel. This will be comprehensive collaboration of designers, manufacturers and entrepreneurs who offer products and specialized services to future married couples.

The PAFD designers are Conrad Graves (chair), Leonard Co (president and project chair), Juhn Rosendo (vice president), Noe Reyes (secretary), Chito Sanchez (PRO), Jose Nepomuceno (treasurer), and Boying Estaquio, David Anorma, Ramon Depositario, Fhel Hangod, Geri Loyola, Vole Soriano May and Irene Lopez (members).

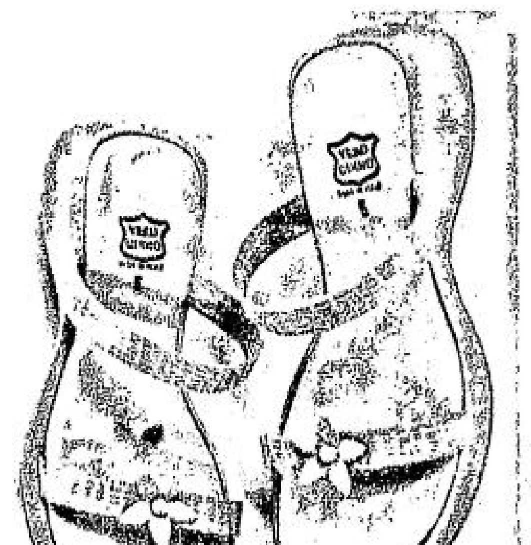
There will be a bridal fashion show featuring the wedding gowns and formal wear of all participating designers and bridal labels and the country's top designers. The Manila Midtown Hotel, which prides itself for having the country's largest pillar-less ballroom, will serve as the perfect backdrop for the show.

Aside from viewing the wedding displays on exhibit, buyers and guests will be kept busy all day long with product presentation, lectures on floral arrangements, and hair and makeup demonstrations.

"I Do…" is a joint celebration of love and matrimony by the PAFD and the Manila Midtown Hotel's 25th year in the hotel industry. Call PAFD at 722-0876, 721-5611 or fax 722-6739.

Back to basics in 2001

VERO Cuoio's 2001 Collection offers strappy sandals for "city day and evening wear," beaded thongs and soft leather wedge-soled slides for women. For men, it is back to basics with one-side buckle leather uppers and loafers. The shop, which has its own house brand, Vero Cuoio, also carries designs by Giancarlo Porta, Paolo Ferri and Due Elle Pertini from Italy, Solaria from France, and Jaime Mascaro and Salord Jover from Spain, among others. Vero Cuoio has three branches: Shangri-La Plaza in Mandaluyong, Robinsons Galleria in Ortigas Center and Festival Supermall in Alabang.



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It's out to say what's-in-and-out

Fashion, as we knew it, has ended. The power now belongs to the consumer, not the designer or style writer. Designers and retailers today can only anticipate—not manipulate—consumer taste and spending

LIFE-STYLED

Thelma Sioson San Juan

SORRY that I missed my column last week. I preferred to have a good sleep, shut out the news, instead of reacting to it. (The headlines made you feel as if you were in Colombia, in the Noriega era. We've learned to live with corruption and thuggery, yes, but narco-rule? Try telling that again to us parents.)

In the meantime, between then and now, I—with the city's fashionistas, culturati, glitterati and other must-gos—trekked to the industrial-chic RCBC Plaza on Ayala Avenue to watch **Marge Enriquez**'s annual letting-go.

You see, the rest of the year, Marge expresses herself through writing, coverage and such-stuff that us media-mortals do. Once a year, Marge grabs the chance to play god to herself (and everybody else in the audience, I suppose) by creating a performance that embodies her life's vision, always by way of dance, but this time also by way of dance, music, acting and video.

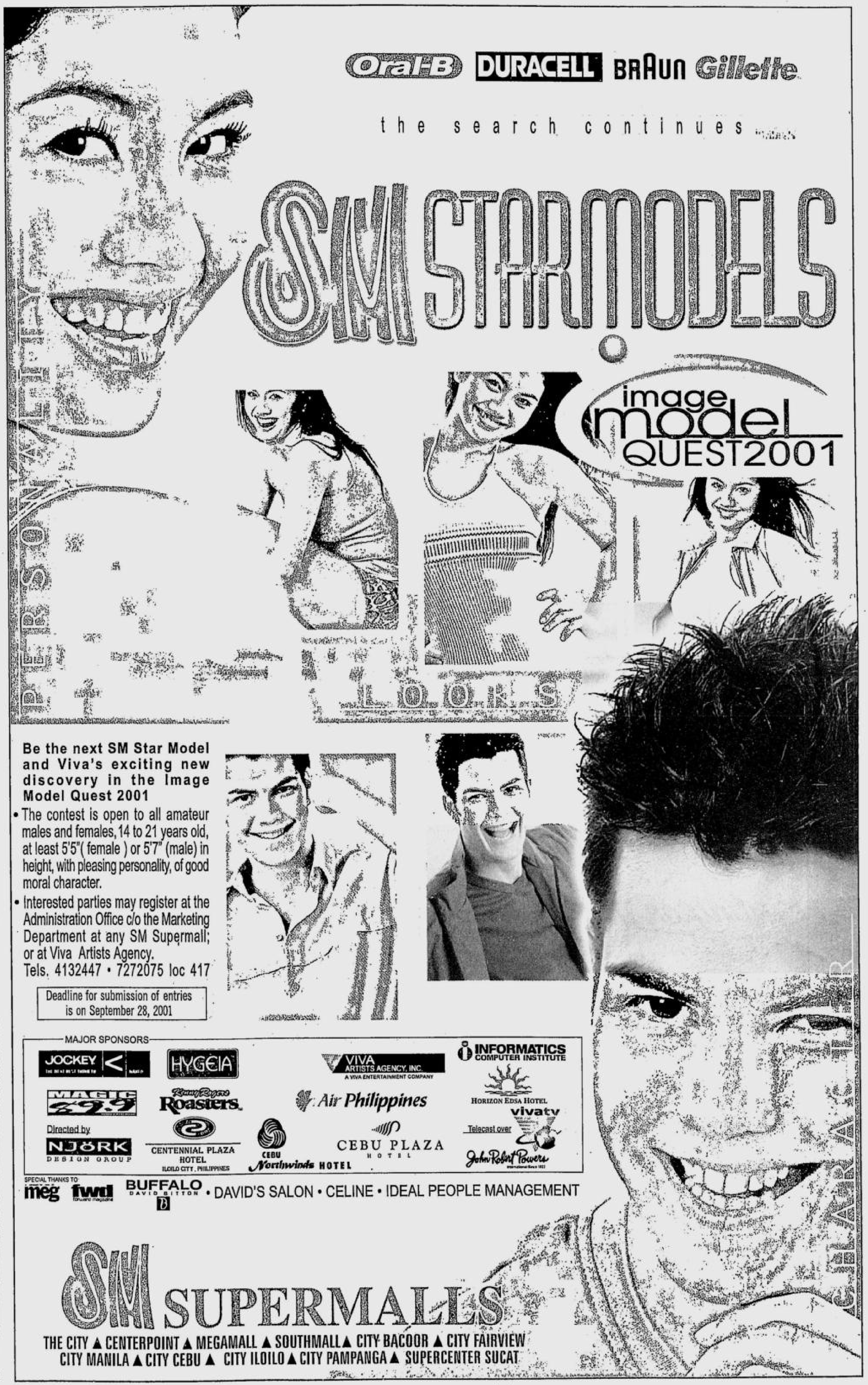
This year, she excerpted from "The Traveler," the beautiful poetry (on karma and the soul) of **Barbara Ramsay** of the Brahma Kumaris, and concretized it through dance, music, the word acted out by Marge, and the cutting-edge images running on several screens down the glass and steel-columned Galleria of the RCBC Plaza.

Marge collaborated again with multimedia artists—director **Katsch Catoy**, guest artist from France, **Ernest Mandap**, fashion designers **Joe Salazar** and **Marden Iglesias** for costumes, sculptor **Impy Pilapil**, video artist **Ed Lejano**, photographer **Neal Oshima, AV-1 Media**, among others.

I didn't wear the right shoes so I couldn't take more than an hour of standing and had to leave

IT'S OUT/ p.E2

NATIONAL Artist for Music Lucrecia Kasilag at RCBC Plaza. She's turning 82 on Aug. 30 and her mind is as sharp as a tack. PHOTO BY TIM YAP



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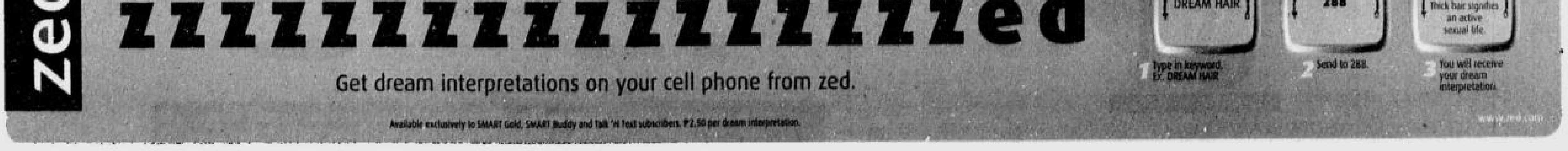
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It's out to say what's-in-and-out

(From page E1)

RETURN of the '80s. Marc Jacobs for Louis Vuitton goes with the new seasonal color, black. The simplicity of line expresses individual style.

way before Marge took a bow, but I would remember this year's performance for one thing—how National Artist (Music) Dean **Lucrecia Kasilag** has carried over her music to the next generation, represented by Marge and the other artists.

Celestial sounds

"Tita King's" music for Marge's performance was haunting, almost ethereal; one listened not to the respective nuances of each indigenous instrument, but to the seamless fusion of all these instruments—light but lingering, Tita King's beautiful music in her autumn years.

Tita King is not exactly able-bodied anymore. She was wheeled into RCBC—the first time I saw her with such dependence—wearing *calado terno*, her hair (sparse, but real) well-coiffed. Her head wasn't upright and her eyes seemed shut, that was why I was reluctant to greet her, but according to Marge, that visage belied the fact that she's as sharp and attentive as ever.

As the busy and young crowd jostled in the lobby, Tita King was just "parked" at the corner, watching everything, as if oblivious to it. This time I didn't hear her booming voice; one actually had to look around to see her presence. It kind of made me feel sad, since for the past two decades, we had been used to her imposing but gracious presence at the CCP and other culture venues.

But while her physical presence was weak, her music was not. And it was a credit to both her artistry and to Marge and her generation's creativity that the music of this National Artist has been transmuted into a hymn for the contemporary generation, with its multimedia and multilayered performances. It's a lineage whose continuity is now guaranteed. In that way will Tita King live longer and her music even much longer. In these dire times, it is this perpetuation of the beautiful soul across many Filipino generations that we can all use.

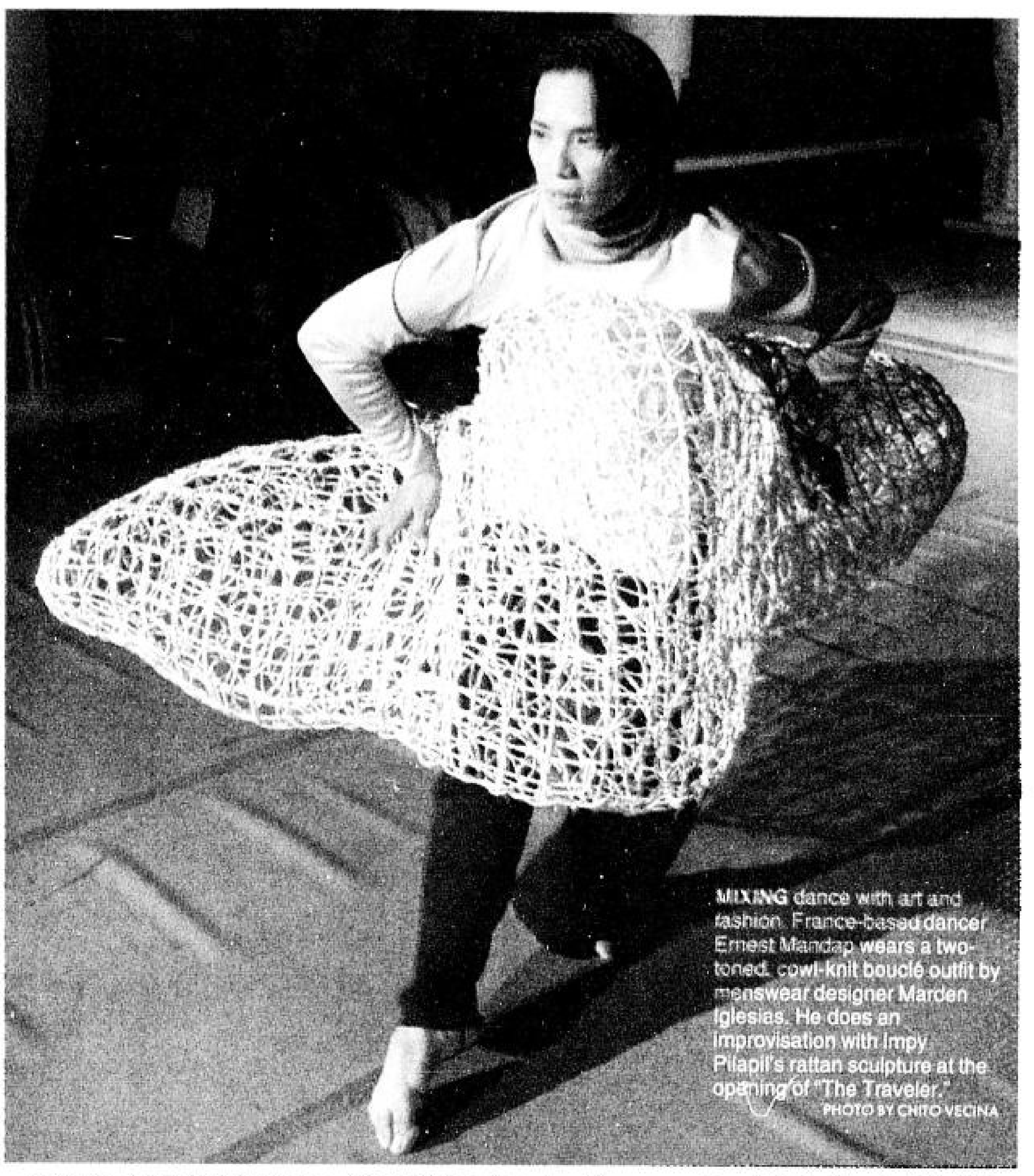
Out-of-the-closet fashion

You know what today's fashion feels like? It's like stepping into your grandma's or mom's closet and pulling out all her lacey, ruffled chiffon, beaded evening bags, stilettos from the '50s. That was how I felt when I walked into the trendy store of top Australian designer **Alannah Hill** in Melbourne—tulle blouses with hand-embroidered accents, ruffled organzas, lace dresses, dainty appliqués on tops and skirts, brocade evening bags and shoes, pop-art prints. It was so '50s and '60s that all it lacked was the smell of mothballs.

Fashion has become a predictable exercise in recycling, although better designers go a step beyond recycling—they at least reinvent. The drift is: Romance and old-world elegance—ruffles, frills, laces, bows, ruche, in diaphanous chiffons, silks or organzas (but given the stretch blends). A swing away from minimalism.

Artisanship—there's revived interest in and appreciation of what can be done by hand, as opposed to the assembly line. Intricate old-world craftsmanship is sought after. You can sell your mom's stuff as vintage clothes, especially if she has a Valera, a Balenciaga, or a Dior.

The mod '60s—today's retail is cashing in on this era, along with the '70s and '80s. Pop-art, psychedelia, the Beatles-bob, the heavy eyeliner, the plastic accessories, you get the drift. For instance, fashion free-spirit **Reret Bonoan** is using a bright yellow plastic floral bag that looks like doilies joined together—so Flower Power '60s—which she got from a Bangkok sidewalk.



MIXING dance with art and fashion. France-based dancer Ernest Mandap wears a two-toned, cowl-knit bouclé outfit by menswear designer Marden Iglesias. He does an improvisation with Impy Pilapil's rattan sculpture at the opening of "The Traveler."

PHOTO BY CHITO VECINA

From the '70s and '80s you can bring out your blousons, leg-of-mutton sleeves, bell sleeves, wraps—and if you have the gumption, the shoulder pads. Our colleague **Alya** said she realized how long she had been around when she didn't have to dig into her mom's closet for the above stuff—but her own. I felt exactly the same way—I didn't have to excavate my closet to retrieve those Chanel gold and silver chain belts or **Auggie Cordero** bows; I realized I hadn't even cleaned them out since the '80s. Now the cycle has caught up with me again. The above bullets are just a few of the inclinations of fashion these days. There are many more, for fashion is no longer a single-tracked direction. Fashion has ceased to be a dictatorship, and designers and brands can no longer play tyrants.

Style over trend

Since the world went eclectic—whether out of need, the times being hard, or because of a whim—fashion has become as much a style as it is a trend. This means that it has become a tool of expression for the individual, no longer a herd movement.

While its supply is global, fashion is individual. You mix inspirations (whether from the '60s, '70s or now) to express your individual style. In short, it's harder and harder now to dictate to the consumer. And it is a wise designer or brand retailer who doesn't underestimate the consumer. Proof of the wisdom of that? Store sales—there's no longer a surefire formula for a boom. This brings me to what I want to point out. Style and society writers/pages have this incurable tendency to box things into what's in and out, hot or not hot. Truth is, in-and-out is out; that thinking is so passé—it went with the yuppiedom of the '80s. To think in terms of what's in and out is so dated. One can/must know trends, but must never be a slave to them. "The power now belongs to us, the consumers." I quoted that from a new book, "The End of Fashion," by **Teri Agins**, a writer covering the fashion business for Wall Street Journal. Agins writes that since the late '80s designers have been "misfiring."

Role reversal

"By the mid-1990s, the forces of fashion had lost their ability to dictate trends. Increasingly, the roles have reversed. Nowadays, consumers are a lot savvier and more skeptical when it comes to fashion."

She said that in a way, "women let go of fashion," meaning as more and more women moved up the workplace, they began to behave more like men, meaning again "fashion's frothy propaganda no longer rallied the troops." They went instead for real-life dressing.

By the 1990s, she said, most Paris designers couldn't set the world's fashion agenda anymore. Instead trends were coming from the streets, the urban teenagers.

So you see, there can never be a solitary trend again. No one can say with infallibility what's in and out. Consumers—in particular, women who want to be fashionable—must see for themselves what works for them.

Fashion players—designers or retailers—if they are to survive, must, Agins writes, "anticipate, not manipulate, the 21st century customer. There's just no other way."

There's just no other way for style writers, too. So what's out? Writers who say what's in and out. 'Nuf said.

E-mail the author at tsanjuan@lnk.com.ph

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The fashion moon still shines fair over Luna

V-NECK silk georgette dress with sequinned band

By Harriet Ann Dy

AFTER THE WELL-ATTENDED debut at Shangri-La Makati of Pia Regala-Hebron as the creative hand behind Luna, sales at Rustan's exceeded 25 percent the following week.

Luna caters to working women in search of refined evening clothes. Its target market made frequent trips to Luna's space. Silk dupioni pants were a hit and the designer was inundated by special orders for evening gowns. That's what hype and a fashion show can do to brand.

I've watched Luna metamorphose from a basic, beaded, silk shantung, spaghetti-strapped line into the bolder, spunkier collection that Hebron came out with during her debut. Fashionistas who equate bold with trendy, however, need not look further. Hebron largely remained faithful to the brand's genteel essence, with a dash of panache.

Her latest collection saw the reincarnation of several trends: from the high drama of Grecian drapery to pleats to a profusion of soft, slinky asymmetrical numbers. Clothes were neatly divided according to color-blocks: copper, aubergine, chocolate, forest green, and black and white.

Ethnic beadwork

Yes, the trademark silk shantung numbers were still there but this time, they were spiced up with ethnic-flavored beadwork with an '80s touch. The copper pleated bell-bottom pants were especially witty; as were the aubergine matte mesh chain mail numbers. Details such as asymmetrical shoulders, uneven hems, beaded lariats, delicate appliqués and butterfly sleeves spruced up otherwise ho-hum silhouettes. A basic aubergine dress, for example, came alive when studded with copper leaf appliqués. The fabrics in the forest green collection was reminiscent of the same subdued shade that Armani Exchange came out several seasons ago. Her floral print reminded me of the big romantic, floral prints that Cacharel used recently. The marriage of good fabric and Hebron's restrained but hipper went very well: wearable, modern pieces that upped Luna's safe sensibility by several notches.

THE ASYMMETRIC cut is one of Luna's themes.

Worth mentioning were the matte chain mail numbers made softer with asymmetric hemlines and layered fabrics, the richly chocolate-colored blousons, a slinky strapless number with floral detail, a ruffled black asymmetric top. The black-and-white asymmetric banded gown was a sure winner; although Metro editor-in-chief Thelma San Juan quickly noted its similarity with Ralph Lauren's creation.

> The debut of a new designer behind Luna augurs more of the brand's genteel essence but with a dash of panache

Velvet was also resurrected in the form of, yes, another asymmetric gown with Chanel-ish beaded fringe details. The corset also experienced another rebirth—thanks largely to the return of "Moulin Rouge" onscreen. For sure, the return of the one-shoulder pieces and corsets is no fluke; both of these pieces have consistently been friendly to most female body forms.

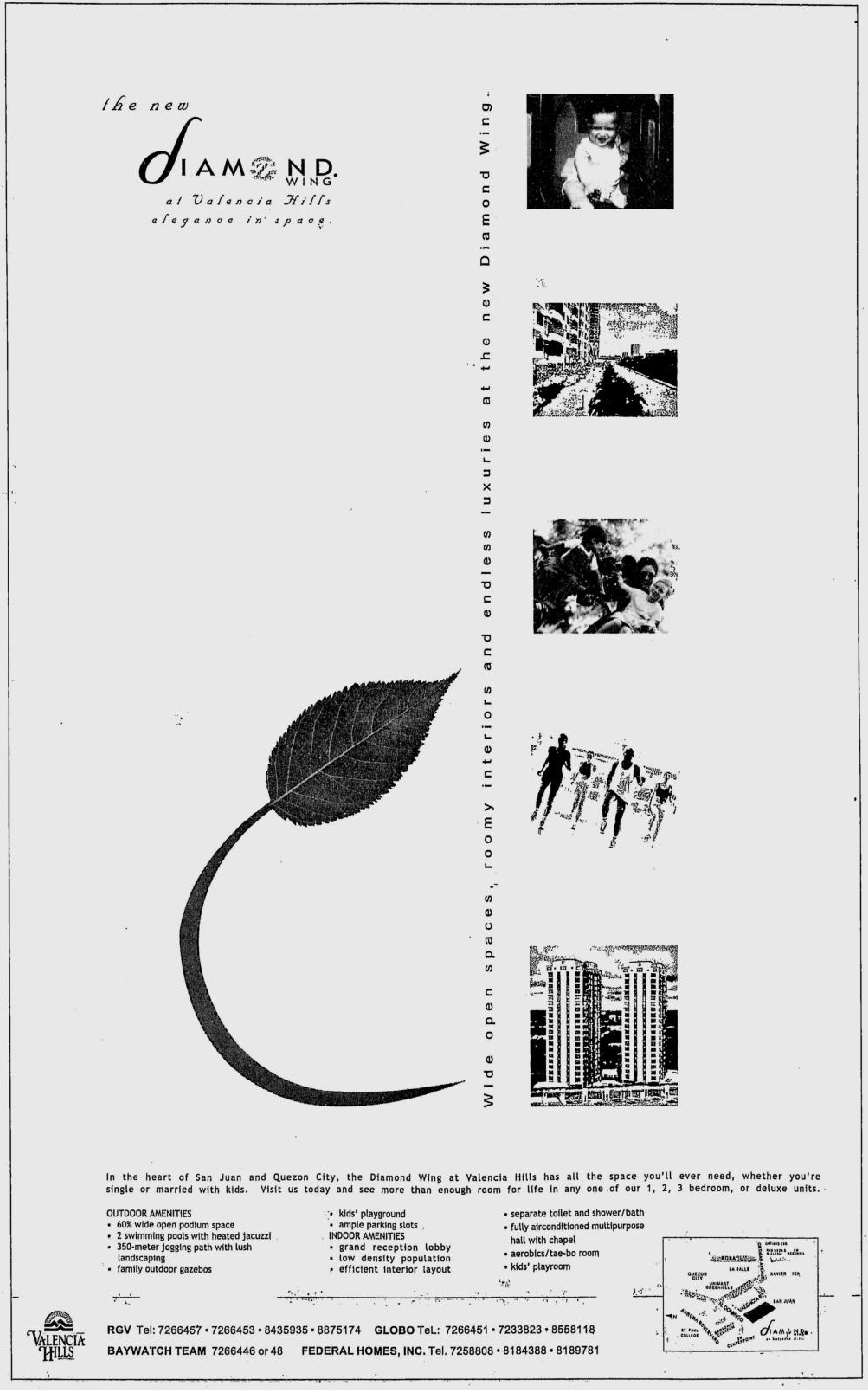
Duotone dressing—or the art of lining the inside of a dress just as dramatically as the outside—another trend that's quietly becoming a staple fashion feature also made its debut via an elegant beaded spaghetti number with white cowl detail. Also worth a round of applause were the white sequin number with piano-like black-and-white beading and another strapless gown with ruched detailing on the side.

But while Hebron made a conscious effort to rein in her creativity with her evening numbers, her bride was a picture of uncontrolled form: a halter-necked, layered and frilly number with a big, dramatic pouf.

Which just goes to show the irony of it all: at a time when most brides-to-be are still clamoring for the late Carolyn Bessette-Kennedy's simple, Narciso Rodriguez spaghetti-strapped bridal gown, the RTW brand behind such classic silhouettes, is veering away from the secure design clutches of this popular style. Can't wait to see the rest of its makeover.

E-mail the author at chinachix@hotmail.com.

SILK georgette double layer blouse and skirt with delicate beadwork



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Reg. Price 72.50

NESTLE
Classic Chocolate
- Fruit & Nut
- Almonds
- Raisins

40 g.
PRICE
P17.50
Reg. Price 18.75

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Chocolate Wafer Sticks
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P71^{00}
Reg. Price 76.50

COMBOS
Cheddar Cheese Crackers
241 g.
TLC PRICE
P116^{50}
Reg. Price 123.50

PRIMA
Buttered Toast Sandwich
10's
TLC PRICE
P17^{75}
Reg. Price 18.75

NISSIN
Cubee Wafers
- Vanilla Fudge
- Choco 'n Cream

30 g.
TLC PRICE
P4^{25}
Reg. Price 4.50

BLUSKIES
Sky Bites Crackers
- Original
- Cheese

75 g.
TLC PRICE
P4^{75}
Reg. Price 5.25

HALLS
Honey-Lemon Candies
100's
TLC PRICE
P42^{50}
Reg. Price 45.75

JACK 'n JILL
Tostillas
- Smoky BBQ

72 g.
TLC PRICE
P15^{75}
Reg. Price 16.50

PRINGLES
Potato Chips
- Wild Consomme

184 g.
TLC PRICE
P60^{00}
Reg. Price 63.50

SELECTA
Moo Chocolate Milk Drink
250 mL.
TLC PRICE
P11^{50}
Reg. Price 12:25

MAGNOLIA
FunChum Juice Drink
- Orange
- Apple

200 mL.
TLC PRICE
P4^{25}
Reg. Price 4.50

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Fruit Juice Drink
- Tropical
- Grapefruit
- Peach

2 L.
TLC PRICE
P52^{50}
Reg. Price 56.50

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In Can
330 mL.
TLC PRICE
P10^{50}
Reg. Price 11.00

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Pure Life Drinking Water
500 mL.
TLC PRICE
P10^{50}
Reg. Price 11.50

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Brandy
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- Medium
- Hard

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- Mountain Fresh
- Crystal Breeze
- Antibacterial White
- Antibacterial Gold

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- Dark Brown, # 30
- Medium Brown, # 40

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- Regular

60 mL.
TLC PRICE
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Insect Repellant Lotion For Kids
50 mL.
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- Skin Smoothing
- Aloe Enriched
- Vitamin E Enriched
- Original Scent

500 mL.
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P106^{50}
Reg. Price 114.75

BETADINE
Feminine Wash
100 mL.
TLC PRICE
P140^{00}
Reg. Price 161.75

MODESS
Feminine Sanitary Napkins
- Maxi

8's
TLC PRICE
P20^{75}
Reg. Price 21.75

SOFTEE
Bathroom Tissue
2 Ply
12's
TLC PRICE
P128^{75}

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- Medium

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Reg. Price 379.75

JOHNSON'S
70% Isopropyl Alcohol
500 mL.
TLC PRICE
P34^{50}
Reg. Price 37.75

REYNOLDS
Aluminum Foil Refill
30 cm. x 8 m
TLC PRICE
P57^{75}
Reg. Price 64.75

ALLWRAP
Cling Wrap
30 cm. x 30 m
TLC PRICE
P37^{75}
Reg. Price 43.75

SCOTT
Empress Table Napkin Flat
200's
TLC PRICE
P60^{00}
Reg. Price 67.75

CALIFORNIA SCENTS
Organic Air Freshener
- All Variants

TLC PRICE
P119^{75}
Reg. Price 139.75

ALBATROSS
Air Freshener
- All Variants

Refill
50 g.
TLC PRICE
P11^{75}
Reg. Price 12.75

ULTRA WHITE
All Purpose Detergent Powder
1 kg.
TLC PRICE
P40^{00}
Reg. Price 42.50

PEDIGREE
Dog Food
- Beef
- Chicken with Liver

8 kg.
TLC PRICE
P649^{75}
Reg. Price 729.75

CLEAN'S-UP
Cotton Mophead
- Small

TLC PRICE
P38^{00}
Reg. Price 44.75

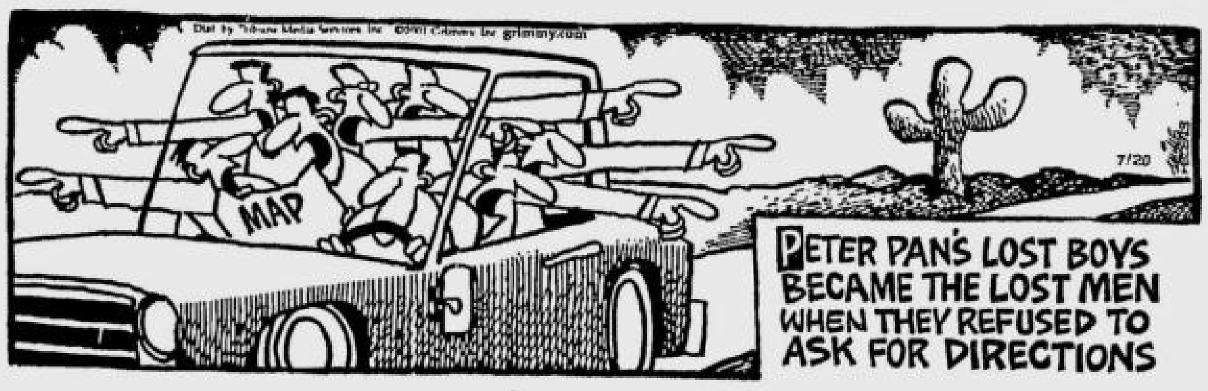
SM BONUS
Adult Dog Food
- Maintenance

2 kg.
TLC PRICE
P89^{75}
Reg. Price 99.75

SM BONUS
Sprayer
TLC PRICE
P29^{75}
Reg. Price 35.00

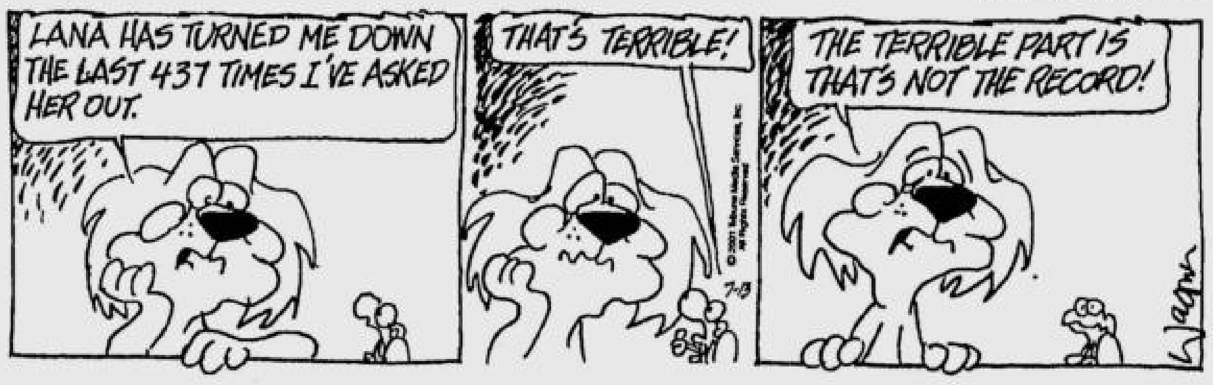
MOTHER GOOSE & GRIMM

BY MIKE PETERS


MAP
7/20
PETER PAN'S LOST BOYS BECAME THE LOST MEN WHEN THEY REFUSED TO ASK FOR DIRECTIONS

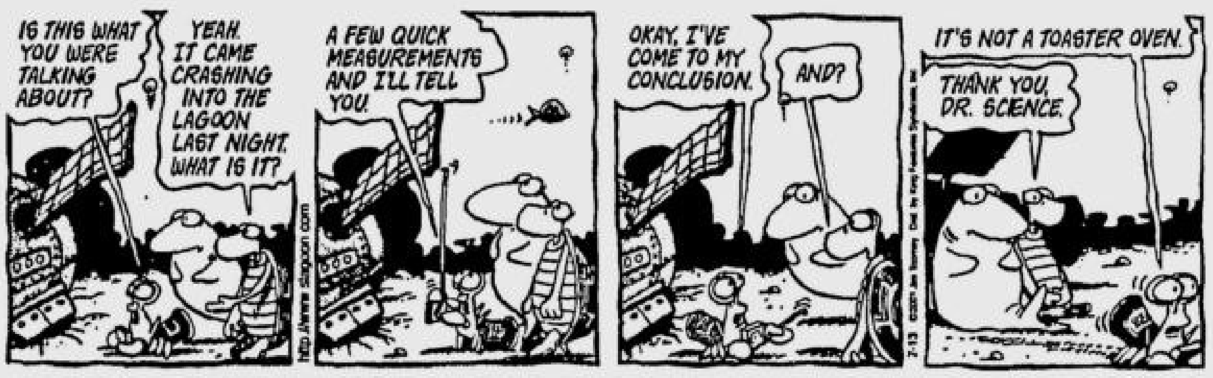
ANIMAL CRACKER

BY FRED WAGNER


LANA HAS TURNED ME DOWN THE LAST 437 TIMES I'VE ASKED HER OUT.
THAT'S TERRIBLE!
THE TERRIBLE PART IS THAT'S NOT THE RECORD!
7-13
Wagner

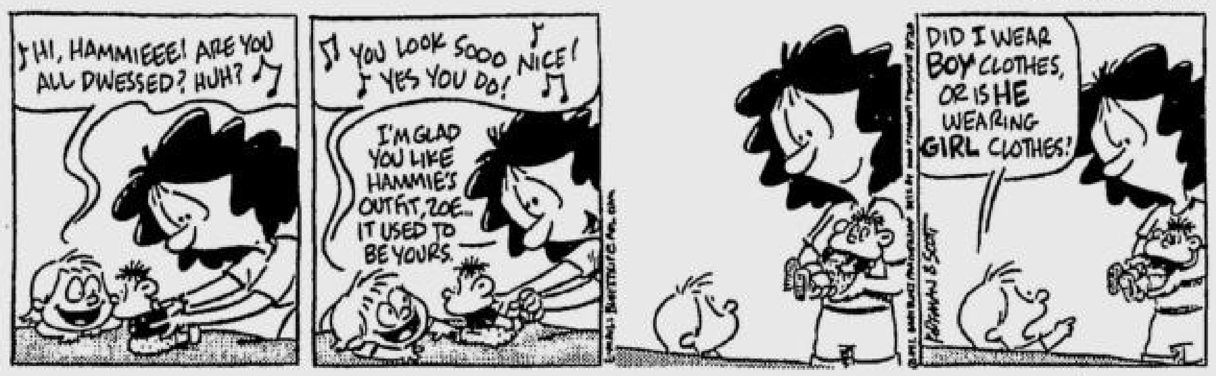
SHERMAN'S LAGOON

BY JIM TOOMEY


IS THIS WHAT YOU WERE TALKING ABOUT?
YEAH. IT CAME CRASHING INTO THE LAGOON LAST NIGHT. WHAT IS IT?
A FEW QUICK MEASUREMENTS AND I'LL TELL YOU.
OKAY, I'VE COME TO MY CONCLUSION.
AND?
IT'S NOT A TOASTER OVEN.
THANK YOU, DR. SCIENCE.
http://www.slagoon.com

BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


HI, HAMMIEEE! ARE YOU ALL DWESSED? HUH?
YOU LOOK SOOO NICE! YES YOU DO!
I'M GLAD YOU LIKE HAMMIE'S OUTFIT, ZOE... IT USED TO BE YOURS.
DID I WEAR BOY CLOTHES, OR IS HE WEARING GIRL CLOTHES!
KIRKMAN & SCOTT

HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Jiang Zemin, Sean Penn, Robert De Niro, Maureen O'Hara, Jim Courier, Guillermo Vilas

Happy Birthday: Focus on your talent to reach success, and don't let anyone sidetrack you along the way. Be a leader, not a follower, by developing your own opinions and being confident about your individuality. Your numbers: 6, 13, 22, 28, 34, 36

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Romantic partners will cost you dearly. Don't try to impress others by being flamboyant or dramatic. Creative endeavors will turn out as planned, but don't take part in joint money ventures.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Talk over any problems with your lover. Friends and relatives will offer good advice. Travel for pleasure or involvement with groups will promote new relationships.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): You will find it difficult to express yourself today. Others will not see things through your eyes, and good ideas will be wasted on those who lack vision.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Opportunities will develop through courses or organizations that offer awareness and self-betterment programs. Traveling will also be eye-opening and spark ideas.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Making changes around your home will be most rewarding. You need a break in your monotonous routine to feel relaxed and ready to pursue your goals. Don't be too hard on yourself.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Try to talk a loved one into joining an organization you already belong to. You'll be doing him or her a favor and will also be contributing a unique individual to the group.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Your overly sensitive nature will confuse others. Deception or misunderstandings are probable, so think before you speak. You should work on home-improvement projects.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): It's likely that your lover will make you jealous. Try to be understanding. Short trips will help you rekindle the relationship.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Be careful how you spend money today. Your lover will certainly let you know about any overindulgence. Try to think of others before making decisions.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Instant romance could be yours if you mingle with friends or a new crowd. Your concern for others will attract individuals who are compassionate and giving.

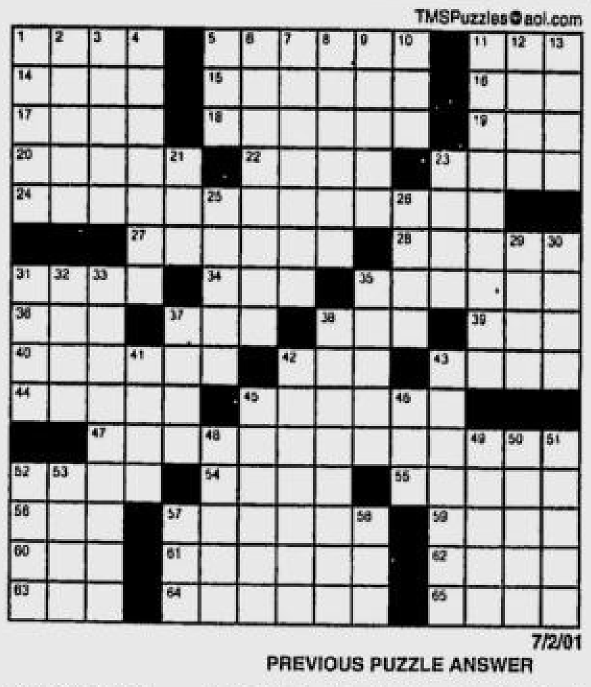
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Secrets may be divulged, which could undermine your reputation. Don't let others in on your thoughts or current projects. Avoid jobs that require you to work with others.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Travel will be enriching if you listen to those with a different approach to life. Greater opportunities for love will evolve through work.

Birthday Baby: You are aggressive, active and always seeking to be in the limelight. You have much to offer and are willing to step out on a limb to get your point across.

DAILY CROSSWORD

TMSPuzzles@aol.com


1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65

7/2/01

ACROSS
1 Tree trunk
5 Chafe
11 Boater or bowler
14 Arabian sultanate
15 Ogled
16 Affirmative vote
17 Soaks up rays
18 Flood barriers
19 Republicans
20 Seat
22 Make an effort to resist
23 Climbing plant
24 Ethiopian leader
27 Ducks and dodges
28 Horses' dos
31 Bedazzles
34 "Ben __"
35 Courteous
36 Actor Chaney
37 Liquid taste
38 Price decline
39 Stage signal
40 Marine facility
42 __ Rafael, CA
43 Goddess of fertility
44 Felix's sloppy roommate
45 Liquefies
47 Tentative ideas
52 Mountain lion
54 Chief
55 Brownstone entrance
56 Mimic
57 Rescuer
59 Neil Young song
60 __ sequitur
61 Did, but doesn't now
62 Mexican bread
63 Letters that bang
64 Double-check text
65 Adam's garden

DOWN
1 Ruin by clumsiness
2 Cornhusker city
3 Neighbor of Maui
4 Stores fodder
5 Entirely
6 Packed on muscle
7 Celebrant
8 Sports venues
9 Exploits
10 Bradley and Begley
11 Cleanliness
12 Galactic time period
13 Record
21 Auto gear: abbr.
23 Small bottle
25 Brit's title in India
26 Dirty air
29 Pin box
30 Notices
31 To boot
32 Misfortunes
33 Performance
35 Group of experts
37 Hindu garment
38 Site of the Circus Hall of Fame
41 Zhivago's love
42 Sink
43 Form of an element
45 Short-billed wading bird
46 Urban RRs
48 Humble
49 Voiced wonder
50 Static
51 Pitch woo
52 Breathe hard
53 Once __ a...
57 Big __, CA
58 Fishing pole

PREVIOUS PUZZLE ANSWER

S	T	A	L	L	S		P	A	T		S	P	A	R
M	A	D	E	I	T		A	B	E		T	A	C	O
A	B	I	D	E	R		T	A	N		E	R	M	A
R	O	E			A	N	I	T	A	B	A	K	E	R
T	O	U	C	H	F	O	O	T	B	A	L	L		
			H	O	E	D		O	L	D		A	D	O
S	P	R	I	G	S		V	I	E		G	N	A	W
P	A	I	N	S		S	I	R		L	A	D	L	E
E	N	D	S		S	P	A		C	O	U	S	I	N
W	E	D		I	C	E		T	O	R	N			
		A	T	T	H	E	S	A	M	E	T	I	M	E
M	O	N	O	S	O	D	I	U	M			N	O	W
O	R	C	A		L	I	D		I	M	P	U	R	E
T	E	E	S		A	L	L		T	E	A	S	E	R
H	O	S	T		R	Y	E		S	T	R	E	S	S

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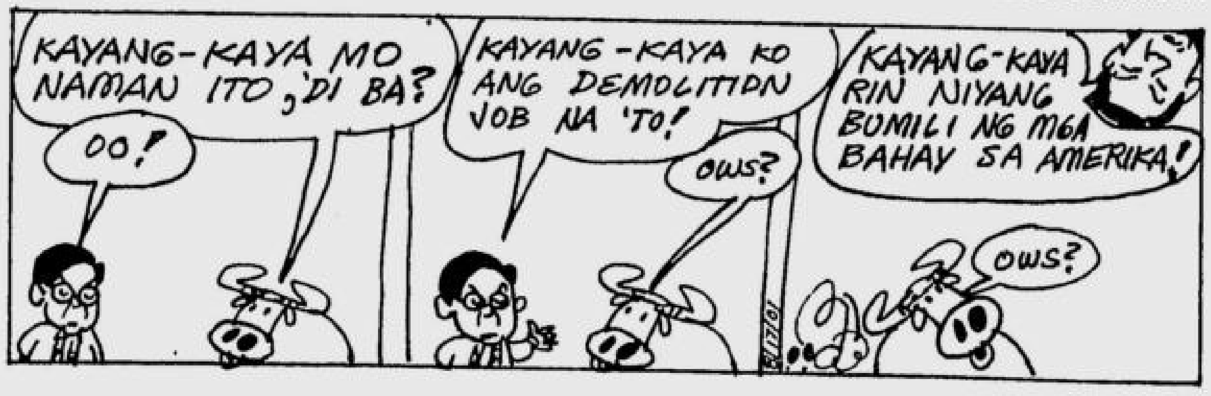
7/2/01

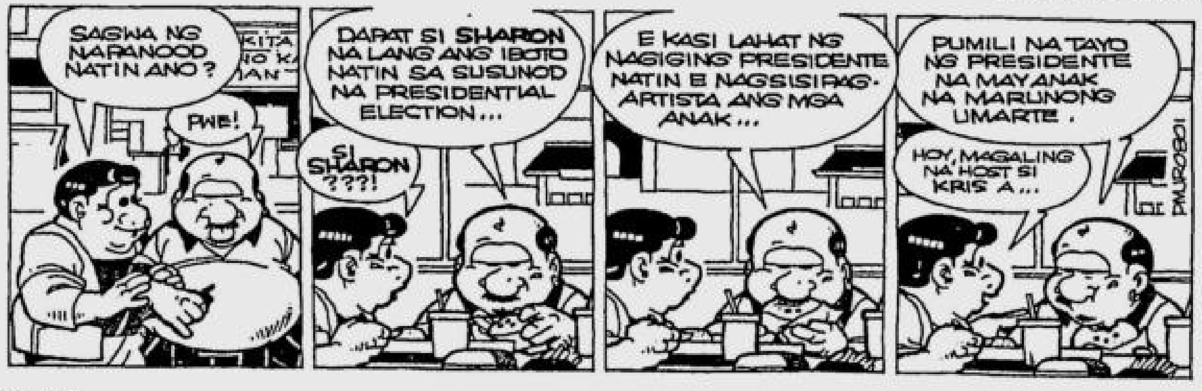
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


KAYANG-KAYA MO NAMAN ITO, 'DI BA?
OO!
KAYANG-KAYA KO ANG DEMOLITION JOB NA 'TO!
OWS?
KAYANG-KAYA RIN NIYANG BUMILI NG MGA BAHAY SA AMERIKA!
OWS?

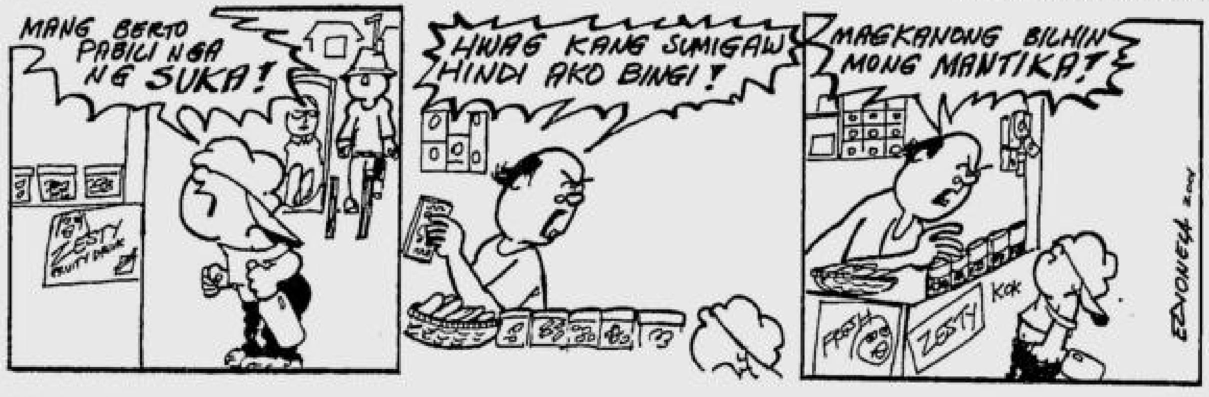
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


SAGWA NG NAPANOOD NATIN ANO?
PWE!
DAPAT SI SHARON NA LANG ANG IBOTO NATIN SA SUSUNOD NA PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION...
SI SHARON ???!
E KASI LAHAT NG NAGIGING PRESIDENTE NATIN E NAGSISIPAG-ARTISTA ANG MGA ANAK...
PUMILI NA TAYO NG PRESIDENTE NA MAYANAK NA MARUNONG UMARTE.
HOY, MAGALING NA HOST SI KRIS A...
PMJR2001

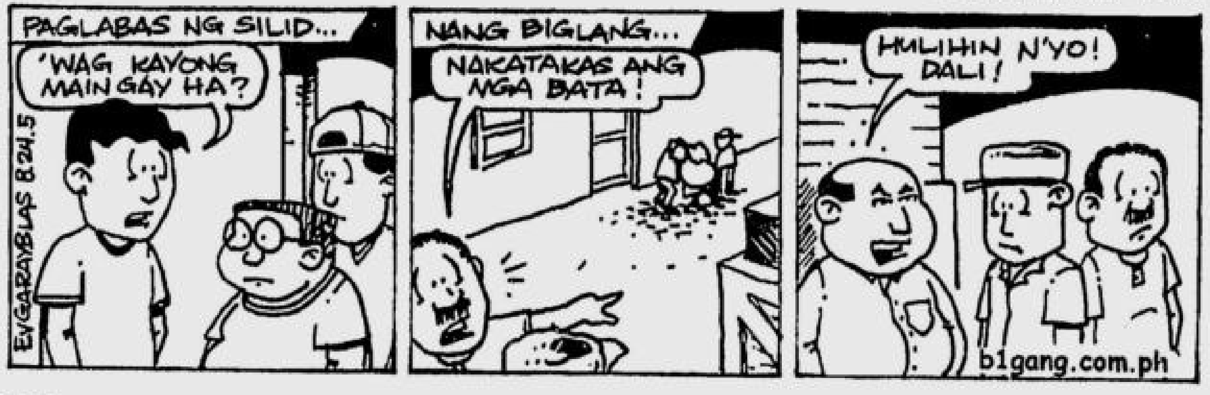
SIMO

BY EDGAR DIONELA


MANG BERTO PABILI NGA NG SUKA!
ZESTY
HWAG KANG SUMIGAW HINDI AKO BINGI!
MAGKANONG BILHIN MONG MANTIKA?!
ZESTY
EDIONELA

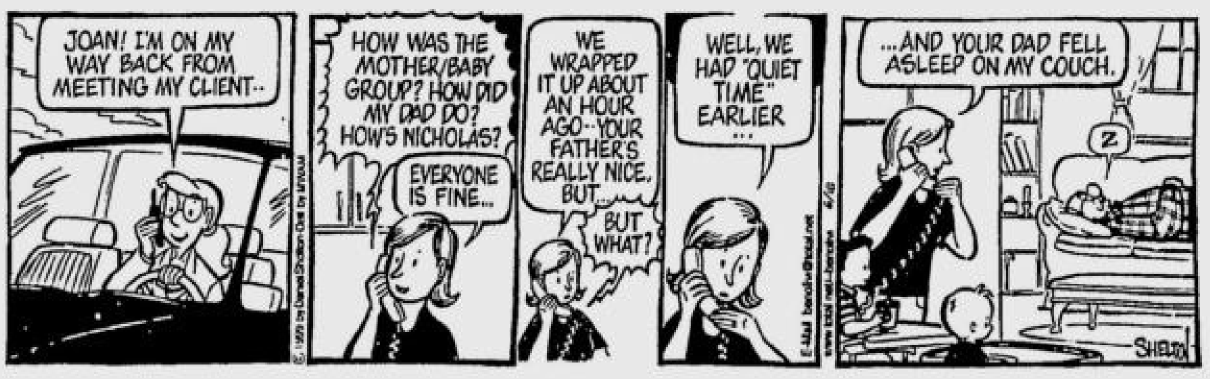
B1 GANG

BY ATS11/ JEA/ FEVG


PAGLABAS NG SILID...
'WAG KAYONG MAINGAY HA?
EVGARAYBLAS 8.24.5
NANG BIGLANG...
NAKATAKAS ANG NGA BATA!
HULIHIN N'YO! DALI!
b1gang.com.ph

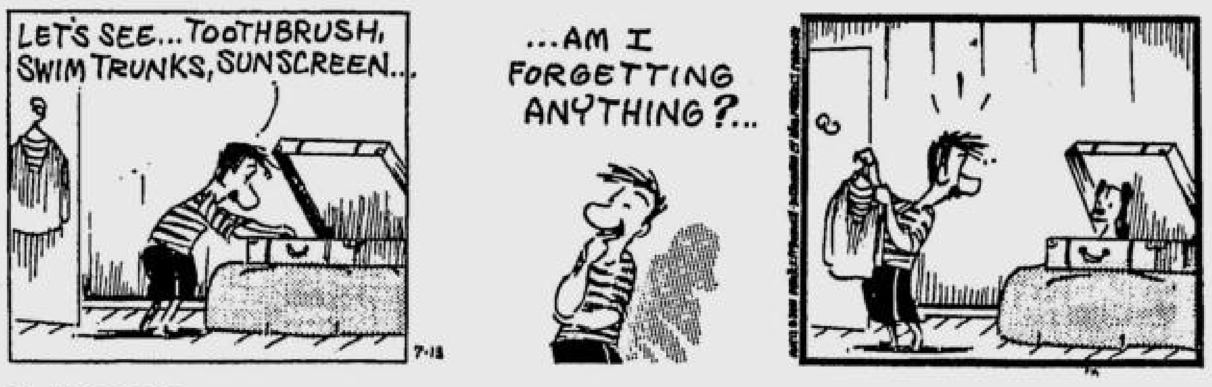
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


JOAN! I'M ON MY WAY BACK FROM MEETING MY CLIENT..
HOW WAS THE MOTHER/BABY GROUP? HOW DID MY DAD DO? HOW'S NICHOLAS?
EVERYONE IS FINE...
WE WRAPPED IT UP ABOUT AN HOUR AGO.. YOUR FATHER'S REALLY NICE, BUT...
BUT WHAT?
WELL, WE HAD "QUIET TIME" EARLIER
...AND YOUR DAD FELL ASLEEP ON MY COUCH.
Z
SHELTON

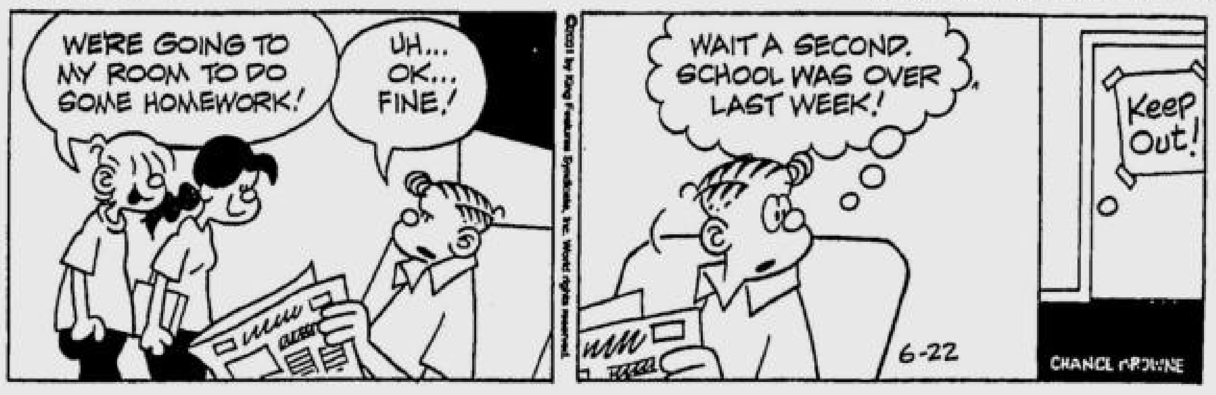
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


LET'S SEE...TOOTHBRUSH, SWIM TRUNKS, SUNSCREEN...
7-18
...AM I FORGETTING ANYTHING?...

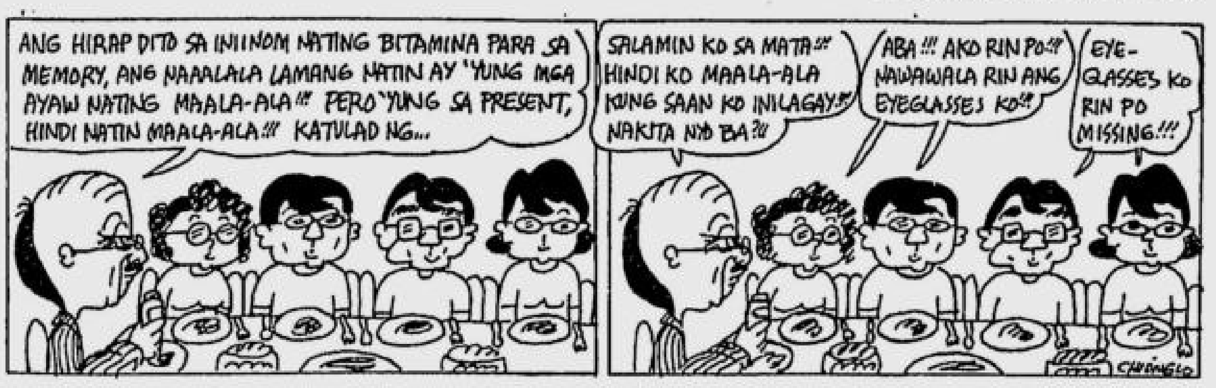
HI AND LOIS

BY BRIAN & GREG WALKER


WE'RE GOING TO MY ROOM TO DO SOME HOMEWORK!
UH... OK... FINE!
WAIT A SECOND. SCHOOL WAS OVER LAST WEEK!
Keep Out!
6-22
CHANCE BROWNE

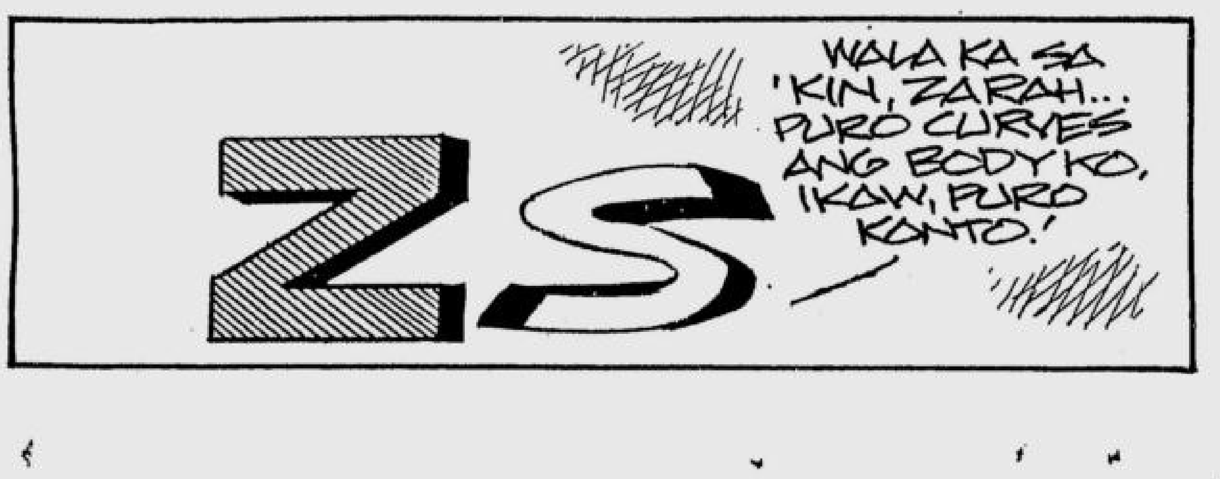
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


ANG HIRAP DITO SA INIINOM NATING BITAMINA PARA SA MEMORY, ANG NAAALALA LAMANG NATIN AY 'YUNG MGA AYAW NATING MAALA-ALA!!! PERO 'YUNG SA PRESENT, HINDI NATIN MAALA-ALA!!! KATULAD NG...
SALAMIN KO SA MATA!!! HINDI KO MAALA-ALA KUNG SAAN KO INILAGAY!!! NAKITA N'YO BA?!!
ABA!!! AKO RIN PO!!! NAWAWALA RIN ANG EYEGLASSES KO!!!
EYE-GLASSES KO RIN PO MISSING!!!
CHIONGLO

TULDOK

BY PAPU & TATUM MILAMBILING


WALA KA SA 'KIN, ZARAH... PURO CURVES ANG BODY KO, IKAW, PURO KONTO!
Z S

The bombshell mystique for dummies

BY CHERISH GARCIA HERNANDEZ

The Bombshell Manual of Style
By Laren Stover
Illustrations by Ruben Toledo
Hyperion Books, 2001, 182 pages

REVIEW

SHE wears clothes that accentuate her curves. She wears impossibly high heels and can have five guys at her feet with one breathless cry for help. She stops traffic and makes heads turn. She is a bombshell.

The "bombshell" as we know it materialized in the 1950s. Marilyn Monroe and Jean Harlow epitomize the bombshell ideal. Because of them, we think one has to become blonde to become a bombshell. (Famous nonblonde bombshells—Elizabeth Taylor and Sophia Loren).

Laren Stover dispels this myth and a few other bombshell misconceptions in her wildly entertaining book "The Bombshell Manual of Style." Stover, who creates names for MAC lipsticks by day, is the editor-at-large of Contents magazine. Her "manual" written with a lighter than air quality, teaches us how to "detonate our inner bombshell."

"The horror!" scream all you feminists out there. We spent half a century trying to gain equal rights and respect for women and here is a book espousing archaic ideals that perpetuate the woman as a sex object.

Come on, ladies, don't you sometimes want to exchange those power suits for a Herve Leger dress and Manolo Blahnik shoes? The rush of feminine allure that envelops you where you're wearing a pair of stilettos may energize your otherwise routine existence.

Beyond the physical

However, awakening the bombshell in you goes beyond physical appearance, according to Stover. It's that enigmatic devil-may-care attitude combined with helpless innocence that gives the bombshell her oomph. A bombshell always makes a dramatic entrance, she never keeps a schedule, spends half her day lounging around, gets away with tantrums and never pays for her perfume or vacations.

But she is not a gold-digger or slut. She believes in lasting relationships and often seals it with marriage. She adores animals and doesn't hesitate to help in their causes. (On the other hand, she also loves leopard prints and has a giant bear rug on her floor) She is not an airhead, on the contrary, she sees herself to be a well-rounded person. She reads voraciously, or at least means to, she's into art (Van Gogh, Bodin, and Warhol—but only if she is the subject), and she's taken up everything from ballet to calligraphy.

A bombshell eschews housework. The only recipes she knows are for cocktails and often this entails wrapping a hotdog in bacon. Her refrigerator has nothing but a magnum of champagne and beauty paraphernalia like nail polish. Her furniture is very rococo, nothing utilitarian at all. She usually has plush wall-to-wall carpeting, often in colors like pink with a telephone to match. She puts on Chanel No. 5 everywhere and never travels light. She adores scarves and you'll never catch her wearing an old tee to bed.

Fun

Stover's book is a lot of fun. It is very tongue in cheek and obviously only an idiot would take it to heart. Many of her ideas are oddly inspirational and she actually seems to celebrate true femininity which has been abandoned in favor of grunge and today's new order. The illustrations by Ruben Toledo, who has done illustrations for the New York Times, Harper's Bazaar, Vogue and Vissionaire, are whimsical and lovely. They are definitely the icing on this entertaining read. If you really want to get into it though, drop by the book's official website www.bombshellmanual.com. You will be treated to Toledo's illustrations and some interactive fun complete with music.

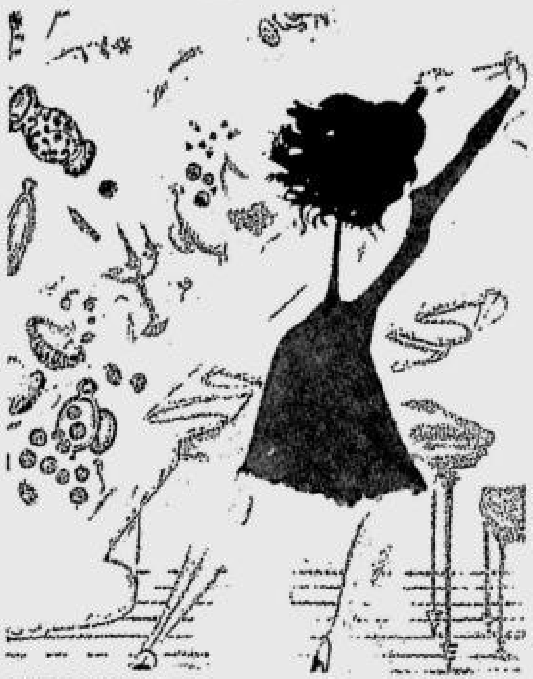
Although this book is not meant to be a serious anthropological study, we feel that the author failed to update the bombshell and settled too much for the postwar bombshell rather than the millennium girl (check out Coerte Felske's novel of the same title—truly the next century's bombshell). But then again, that would be taking the book too seriously. The book is simply a great read to share with your girlfriends. I don't think I'll ever get into marabou mules or hot pink lipstick, but there definitely is something to be said about mixing martinis in smashing lounge wear while listening to "Girl from Ipanema."

If even that is a stretch, try taking up the bombshell's outlook in life. She basically sees life as a movie with her as the star. At the very least, thinking like that might give you that bombshell aura!

Available at PowerBooks

E-mail the author at cherishgh@tayahoo.com

> Monroe, Harlow and Loren had that enigmatic devil-may-care attitude combined with helpless innocence



THROWING a tantrum

Cabaret chic

BABA Parma

JOEY@92.3 FM knows that movies and fashion make a lively mix. That was why the station got the help of leading names in style to provide chic to the style-filled movie, "Moulin Rouge," during its premiere at the Cinema 6 of Glorietta 4.

Vittorio designed outfits inspired by the film. Under the helm of fashion director Jackie Aquino and with makeup by Lancôme and hair by Patrick Rosas, the country's top mannequins sashayed on the catwalk earning raves from the audience.

Among the scene-stealing designs were the stripped *piña* and organza bustier worn by Phoemela Baranda, the gold-plated spandex halter dress on Wilma Doesnt, the black-and-white velvet petal tulle slip dress on Baba Parma, the samurai pink shirt with kimono sleeve over red fringed micro-mini on Divine Lee and the green mosaic turtle neck tee with gold hot pants on Grace Molina.

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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 2518, Series of 2001

RED V-neck sleeveless top with neck accessory (P520); black cigarette cut pants (P520)

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Black is black

BY CAMILLE T. CRUZ
PHOTOS BY CHITO VECINA
PICTORIAL DIRECTION BY ALBERT AVELLANA

There's no end to the reinvention of black. Nowadays, black leather is giving greater edge to the color

NO matter how adventurous we are in the use of color for our accessories and wear, we will always fall back on a color that is considered safe.

Black is one of the most basic—and safe—colors. It has been reinvented in stripes, irregular geometric shapes, and even leather-faux.

What's exciting about black is that it has created many looks for the many moods of a season. For the faux leatherette look, the two hot variations are the hard rock and the soft chic.

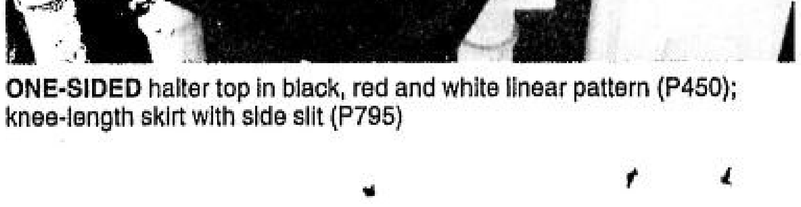
For the punk-rock look dating back to the '80s, you may try a halter geometric printed top, perhaps with geometric jagged prints and a little exposure of the skin. A faux leather jacket worn with a knee-length skirt may be paired with a bright-red inner tank and great high-heeled, knee-length boots.

Since leather does not come across as feminine, you may employ the peasant-themed blouse, which is soft and feminine, matched with straight-cut leather pants and thick two- or three-pronged belt.

The mood of black has been a bit heavy lately. Lighten it up by creative pairing.

E-mail the author at Camille_cruz@hotmail.com

BLACK-AND-WHITE circular printed halter top (P420); black pencil-cut, knee-length skirt with center skit (P899); black zip-front jacket with mandarin collar (P1,200)



ONE-SIDED halter top in black, red and white linear pattern (P450); knee-length skirt with side slit (P795)

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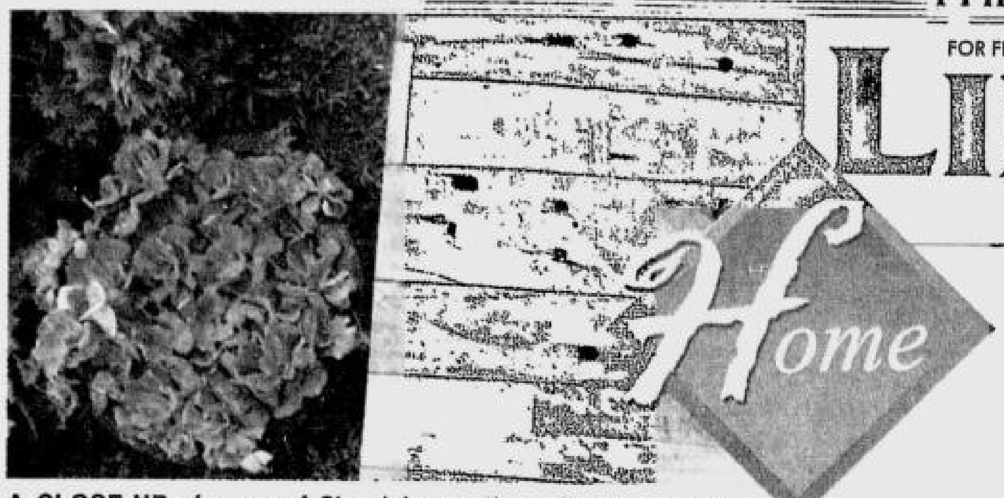

A CLOSE-UP of some of Sherrie's creations. Hardwoods like *molave* turn silver if left to the elements.

The complete (and secret) Filipino garden

BY ADRIAN LIZARES
PHOTOS BY CHITO VECINA
PICTORIAL DIRECTION BY ALBERT AVELLANA

HAS it ever occurred to you that our country has a dearth of public parks and domains? With the impending destruction of Jardin Botanico or the Mehan Gardens because of politics, what will happen to our green spaces?

The Philippines is an extremely wealthy botanical resource. It certainly should properly showcase its gifts. But we continue to look for that "secret" garden."

Why do many gardens remain forever hidden from the eyes of many? Privacy would

THE/P.F2

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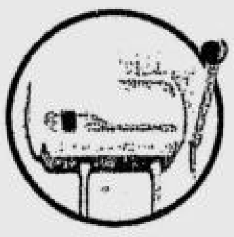

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A PINE tree festooned with a philodendron, an angel's trumpet marks the entry.

CHINESE holly in full bloom as chair

NATURAL sculpture

The complete (and secret) Filipino garden

THUMBERGIA mysorensis

IPOMEA tuberosa—the wood rose

THE PANICLE of a blooming begonia nelumbifolia

THE ONLY other residents of our secret garden

(From page F1)

probably be the main reason behind such elusiveness. The notion of secrecy does not affect many Filipino gardeners when creating their own piece green space. But it will eventually, though. The culture of the Pinoy within the confines of his *bakod* could also be a factor. So it is left to us curious seekers to look around and uncover what is behind those tall walls or overgrown thickets.

No rules

Gardening has no rules. You may start one by just planting seeds and watching everything grow, or you can hire a professional and let him do the work.

All I know is that now is a good time to start a garden. What with the monsoon rains, your plants will less likely suffer from the trauma of drying out, establishing themselves fairly well for the seasons ahead. Just be wary of typhoons. You may want to tie down your young trees securely with guy ropes and hitches while their roots take hold.

You may also want to save yourself the trouble of "perfectionism." Within any garden it is normal to be pleased at the way things are turning out, and at the same time, it is also normal to be dismayed about how things turn out in the face of the highest expectations. Simplify yourself: if insects eat a plant year after year, then maybe the plant does not belong in your garden.

But if we should let things grow on their own, then why bother to garden at all? If all plants are survivors, why can't we simply plunk ourselves in the middle of all this and revel at the wildlife! It is simply because gardening is an enjoyable thing to do!

Quintessentially Filipino

Today's secret garden is quintessentially Filipino. It has all the *sangkot* (echoing the lyrics of "Bahay Kubo"). You would not think there is a garden because there are no imposing structures that announce its presence to the visitor. The only threshold from the street is a humble iron gate overshadowed by huge clumps of bamboo. It is best reached by word of mouth.

In one case, my first view of this garden was a huge *banga* filled with water in which cuttings were left to rest. In the midst of all this tumultuous growth was a path that led you up to the main house and into a clearing that doubled up as an extension of the house itself. The gentle curve of the hedge grasses drew my attention. Despite the ferocity of two Dalmatians that guarded the house, the visitor invariably would settle down. The entire garden was still under a canopy of trees; the visitor was forever in the dapple of the shade.

From this clearing strewn with hardwood tables and chairs made by the chatelaines' daughter were paths that led further down to other parts of the garden. I followed one through a line of calatheas in bloom into the rear area where the househelps lived. Around the vegetable garden sat one of the most charming topiary arrangements I had seen in a long time—an elfin table with four chairs of clipped Chinese holly also in bloom! Beyond that was a bamboo arbor for string beans and cucumbers; and a metal one for the *bignonia* vine—a *thunbergia* species originally from Mysore, India. Here and there were clumps of wild bananas and ornamental bamboos draped with the wood rose, the *ipomea tuberosa*. Here chickens clucked at each other and in full view of their neighbor, a pot-bellied pig.

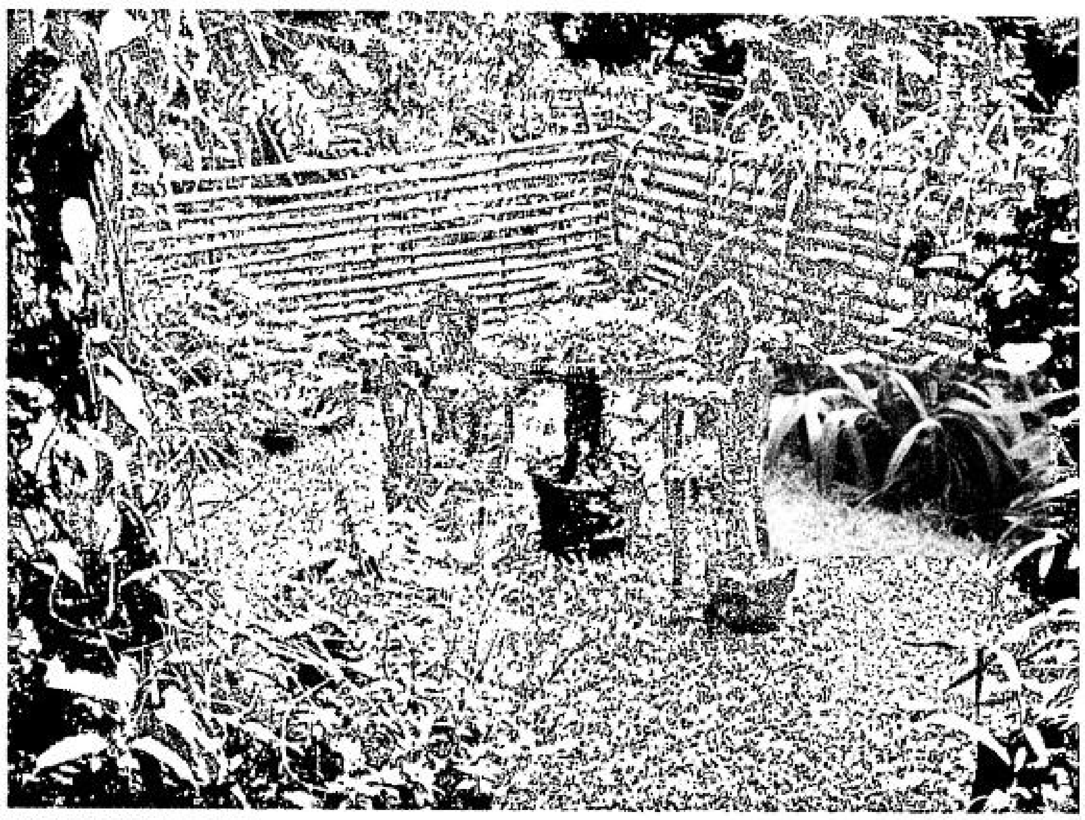
Not thought-up

Most of what we saw in this garden did not look "thought-up" by someone who tried to force its will on plants and nature (except maybe the topiary seating arrangement). It did take quite some time to achieve though—18 years—the proud benchmark of which were the pine trees that crowned the top of the hill. These had been planted as seedlings long ago.

Of course, among the wide collection of other plants, I noticed the profuse number of begonias and heliconias. The former a miniscule plant with vibrant leaf markings, the other a tropical garden staple with oddly shaped flowers. And there were so many of these begonias. It was a veritable botanical collection.

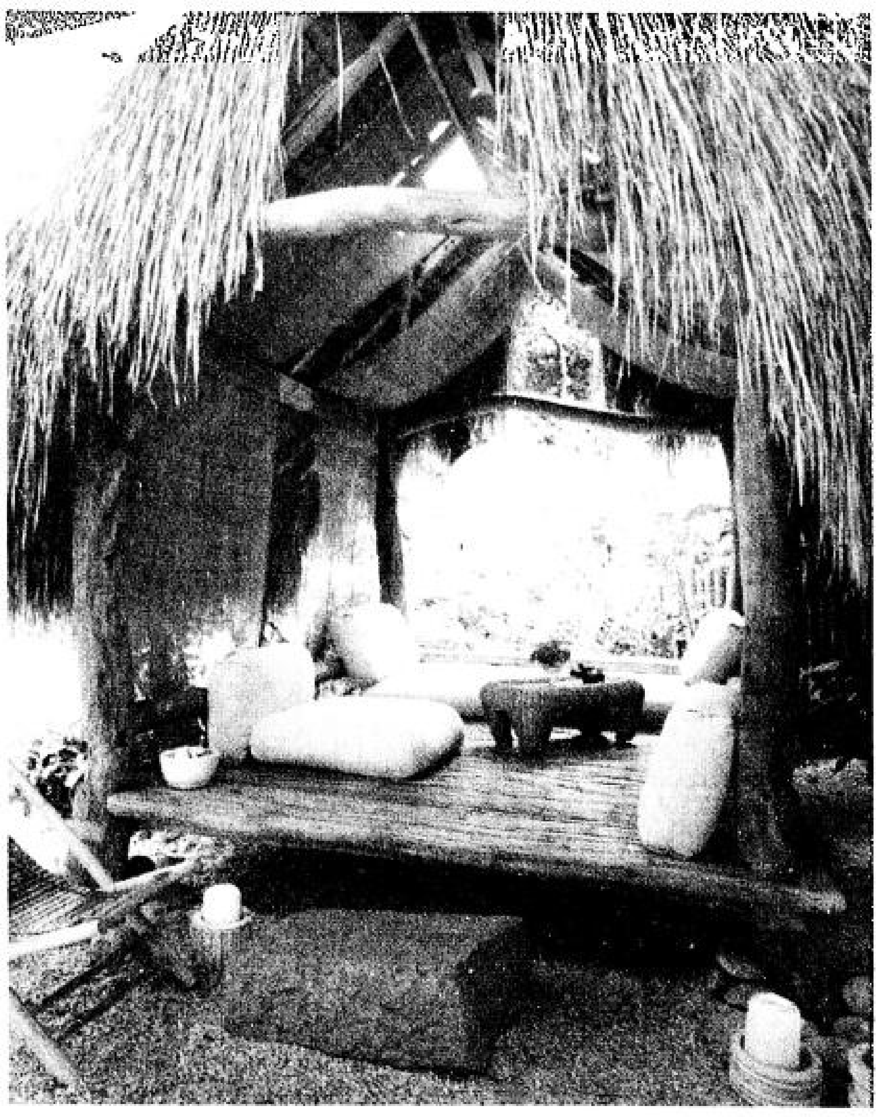
Mother Susan and her daughter Sue Sherrie worked tirelessly to keep the place together. Every time I was near Sue Sherrie she had a broomstick and always a pile of dead leaves after her. No wonder the garden looked perfect. Sue Sherrie insisted that there was no need of pesticides or herbicides in this garden. She looked proudly around.

In our large and concrete city one catches only fleeting glimpses of beauty. I recall a writer who lived in Tokyo who would assess the city by a 300-year-old Zelkova tree growing in a parking lot from her apartment's second-floor window. Surrounded only by the plants she cared for and using her tiny balcony as a window through which she viewed the world, with all its brief glimpses of natural beauty, she would always imagine the world beyond to be one large garden.


THE ELFIN'S corner

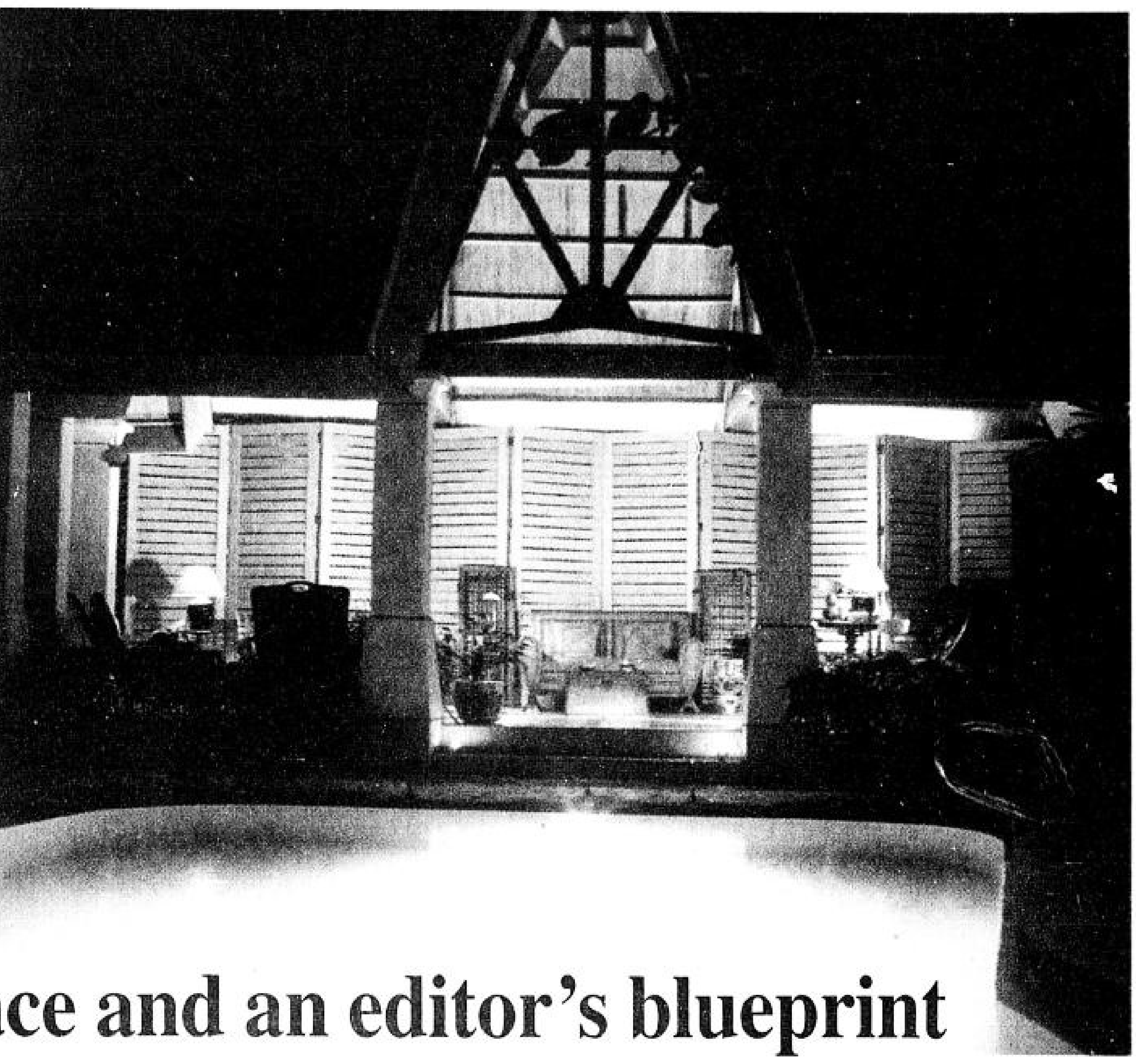
Gardening has no rules. The best Pinoy gardens do not look planned or contrived

THE PINE trees planted from seedlings 18 years ago



YOLANDA Perez-Johnson, artist and soul of Soumak (an enterprise that exports and retails some of our country's finest handwoven rugs and fabrics), highlights her home with her work and the artistic sensibilities of our tribal craftsmen.

PHOTO BY: AVA LUGTU



INTERIOR designer Junie Rodriguez's refreshing creativity is affirmed with the brilliant harmony of pieces from different cultures, eras and materials in a singular space.

AVA LUGTU

Giving room, breathing space and an editor's blueprint

By Doris G. Nuyda

A NUMBER of beautiful homes and buildings found in the Philippines and Asia have graced BluPrint magazine, which celebrated its second anniversary last month. According to editor in chief Tina S. Bonoan, her publication (blurbed as "Architecture and Design Source Book"), tries to feature, besides interiors, unusual subjects whenever possible. One of these was the coverage recently of "Period Pieces," which gathered little and big, old and new, ethnic and modern home furnishings akin to a catalog.

Material-gathering of this sort must fascinate Bonoan and her staff for it requires patient research and love for beautiful home accessories to come up with such compilations in almost every issue.

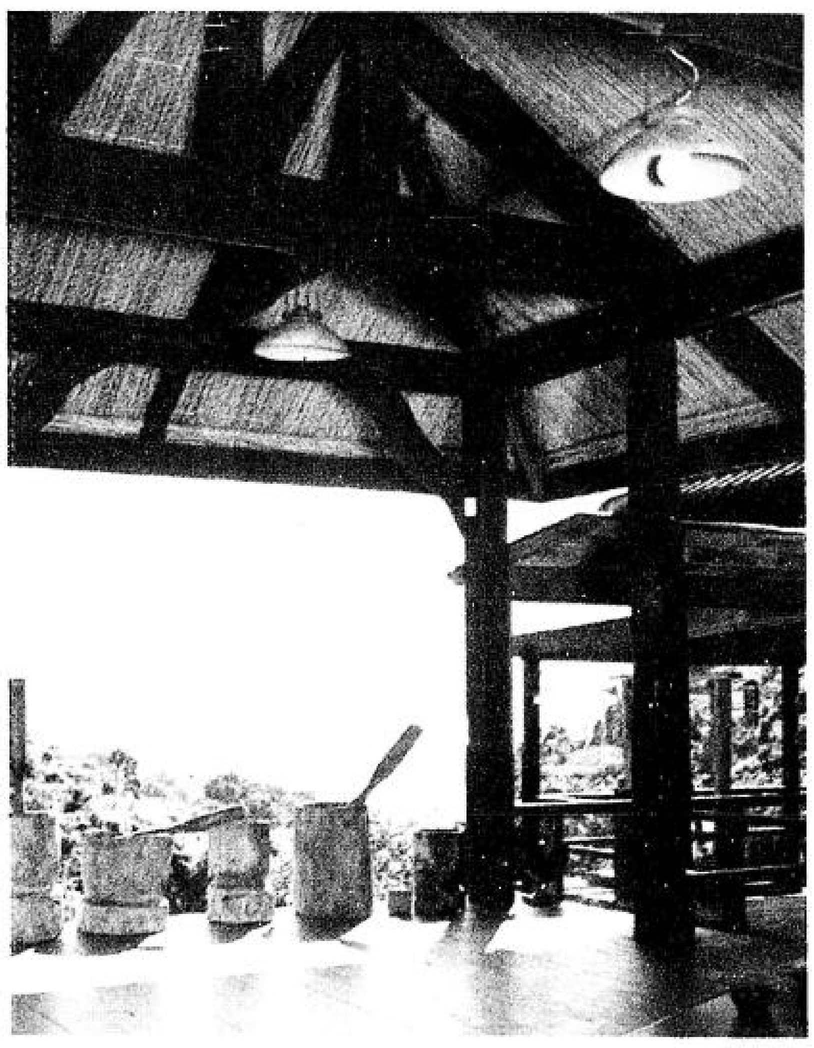
Bonoan, an architect by profession, does her own blueprints occasionally, but she would rather express ideas from her heart and soul through the pages of her bimonthly magazine.

"I try to promote things Philippines as much as I can," she says to explain part of her editorial emphasis, which also shows her to be environmental-conscious in her desire to feature nature and natural lifestyles.

Her selection of homes is based on "stringent design criteria—the individuality of the designer, his passion, creativity and inclination toward aesthetics and function as translated in his work, [as well as] his respect for heritage, culture and environment."

Bonoan's magazine is not so much about the personalities behind the house but, she says, as much as the role the house plays in the lives of the owners.

To mark BluPrint's second year, Bonoan put together her personal choices of rooms and spaces. We reprint some of them here.

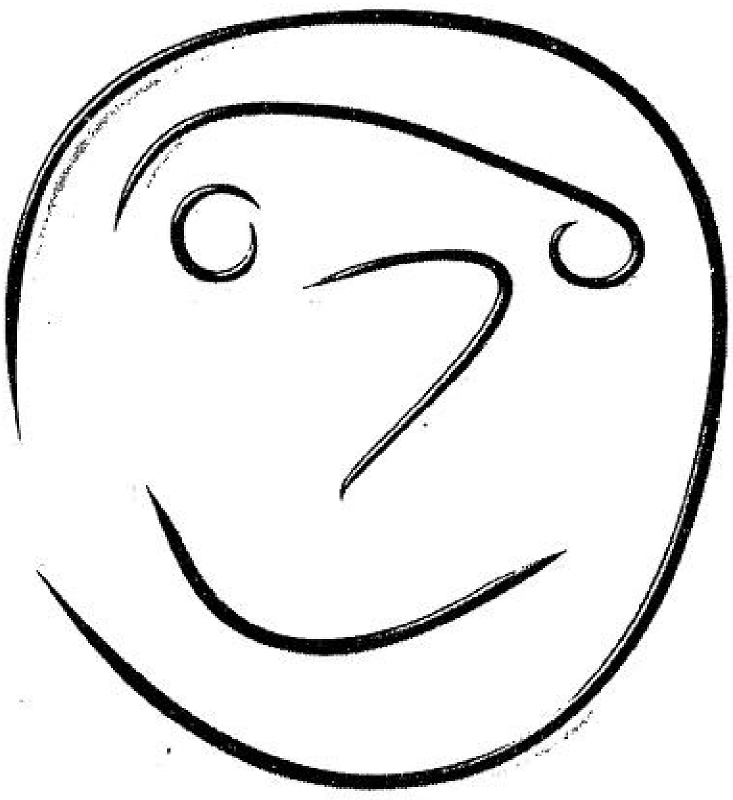


BENJI Reyes reroutes the architectural path of the traditional *bahay kubo* for his hillside abode by fusing contemporary and innovative details that only a furniture virtuoso like him can do.

PHILIP ESCUDERO

LANDSCAPE designer Rico Sison creatively incorporates art pieces and sculptural items to give his garden a varied feel that encompasses the natural and the modern.

PHILIP ESCUDERO



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Asian Spirit
THE PEOPLE'S AIRLINE

Bottled gourmet treats at weekend bazaar

BOTTLED goodies by Connie's Kitchen are available at Shop@thefort's Time and Tide bazaar, NBC Tent, Bonifacio Global City, Aug. 18-19. On sale are Gourmet Daing, Boneless Dried Labahita in Olive Oil with Garlic and Herbs, Gourmet Tuyo and other variations.

GOINGS-ON

Also available are Marinated Feta Cheese, Cheese Torta, Smoked Salmon, Marinated Kesong Puti, and many more. Over a hundred exhibitors are participating in the bazaar, which is open from 9 a.m.-7 p.m.

DIALOGUE. Liz Claiborne hosts a dialogue on hair and makeup for special occasions on Aug. 17, 3:30 p.m., Liz Claiborne Store, 3/F, Shangri-La Plaza Mall, Edsa. Experts from Lancôme, Hairbytes and Flair demonstrate how to create looks suitable for different occasions. Call 633-6441/6434.

CONCERT. The De La Salle University Chorale will hold its 14th anniversary concert, "A Tribute to Music," Aug. 18, 7 p.m. at the PhilamLife Auditorium. Call 524-4611, local 702 and 737.

REUNION. Arellano High School (AHS) Class '77 will hold a bingo get-together, Aug. 19, 1 p.m. at the AHS quadrangle. Call lawyer Romy Gonzales at 371-8836 or Rose Silva at 781-7695.

SEMINAR. A free seminar on "Developmental Disabilities Existing in the Philippines Today," will be held Aug. 25, at the Bulwagan of the Quezon City Hall. The seminar will include an educational workshop for parents, volunteers, caregivers and persons interested in helping the disabled. Call 433-5552 and 741-1823. Deadline for registration is Aug. 20.

FOOD SERVICE WORKSHOP. ProActive Center for Training (PACT) will hold a basic food servers training Aug. 27-31, 1-5 p.m., at Café Astoria, Astoria Plaza lobby, J. Escriva Drive, Ortigas Center, Pasig City. Call 823-4947.

EXHIBIT. Pieces of Ming, a team with over 50 years experience in Ming ceramics and porcelain, will present Ming Ceramics. The launch of this collection will be held at The Gallery Level, The Peninsula Hotel, Makati City on Aug. 20-23, with an opening cocktail party on Aug. 20, 7 p.m. Pieces of Ming will allocate a percentage of sale profits from these priceless pieces to the Philippine National Museum.

WORKSHOP. Tower Book House, with Women in Assistance, a service-oriented group for women, is offering a workshop for working women, aged 25 and above. Dubbed "Comfort and Joy," the workshop is designed to help women redefine themselves by seeking solutions/alternatives to their various concerns. Facilitator is writer, book author and Filipiniana book publisher Visitacion "Chit" de la Torre. The workshop starts this August. You can choose from Wednesday or Saturday slots, 6-8 p.m., at the Windsor Tower, 163 Legaspi Village, Makati. Call 815-6925/4938.

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